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ABSTRACT

The National Consultation on the Church in Community Life was held at Ohio State University for the purpose of bringing into focus the ecumenical process for the reevaluation, redefinition, and revitalization of the Catholic Church's mission in nonmetropolitan America. Papers were presented in the areas of theological perspectives, understanding the small community, and creative experimentation. Also included was the report of a study of religion conducted in 2 towns in Oklahoma. Major conclusions of that study were that the more fundamentalistic Protestant groups reached higher levels of consensus on beliefs about the supernatural than did Catholics, that Catholic respondents' beliefs and attitudes on race were more liberal than those found in previous studies, that the data showed few differences as a function of the rural and urban conditions of the respondents, and that 75% of the Catholics agreed with the statement that the "laity has the right to question church teachings in some or all matters." (PS)

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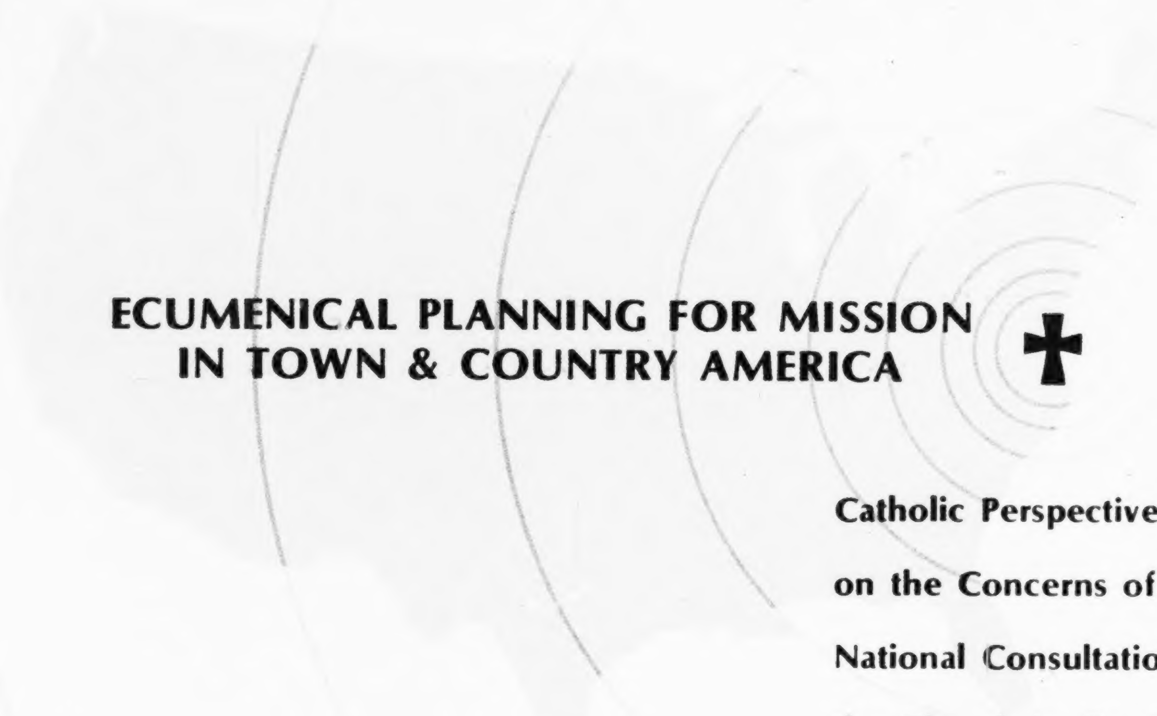

ECUMENICAL PLANNING FOR MISSION IN TOWN & COUNTRY AMERICA

Catholic Perspectives on the Concerns of the National Consultation on the Church in Community Life, Held at Ohio State University, 1967

edited by

Bernard Quinn
D. Ms.

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Ecumenical Planning for Mission in Town & Country America

Catholic Perspectives on the Concerns of the National Consultation on the Church in Community Life, Held at Ohio State University, September 5-8, 1967

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Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) 1717 Massachusetts Ave., N.W. - Washington, D.C. 20036

FOREWORD

> In each generation the imperatives for the church must be reevaluated and redefined. The church must also be revitalized to accept the challenges of the new definitions and evaluations if it is to be an authoritative agent in the process of redemption for mankind. [Ecumenical Designs, p. 169.]

The National Consultation on the Church in Community Life, held at Ohio State University, September 5-8, 1967, came into being in response to the conviction that "reevaluation, redefinition, and revitalization" of the Church's mission in non-metropolitan America is a task of such magnitude that only the most intense ecumenical planning and action can possibly bring it about.

Town and country America, containing approximately one-third of the total population (67 million people) is in the throes of a profound demographic, economic, social, and religious change. Only the most concerted ecumenical effort will enable the Church to respond creatively and responsibly as a redemptive agent within this change-process.

The eighteen-hundred delegates - representing some fifteen major Communions - were not asked to adopt a "program" or "formula" for mission in non-metropolitan America today. Rather they were asked to consider a "process" - a process whereby all concerned Christians would seek to understand what is happening in town and country, to reflect on the Church's missionary imperatives, and to plan and work together to the extent that present ecumenical realities will allow.

The Consultation's purpose was to bring into "high visibility" this ecumenical process, which has already begun in many local communities and regions, and which hopefully will increase in intensity and effectiveness at every level of the Church's life. The Consultation also attempted to create a sense of solidarity among ecumenically-minded Christians deeply concerned with this apostolic problem, and to provide practical tools and resources for the use of those already engaged in the planning process.

In preparation for the Consultation, the delegates were asked to read and study a 186-page booklet, entitled Ecumenical Designs: Imperatives for Action in Non-Metropolitan America.[1] Prepared by a special Studies Committee, this booklet served to focus the attention of the Consultation on the "ecumenical planning process," and to provide a point of reference both for agreement and disagreement.

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[1] Available through CARA.

Catholic participation in the Consultation was sponsored by the Diocese of Columbus, with the assistance of CARA's Town & Country Department. There were sixty-two Catholic delegates, from eighteen States.

In order to aid the Catholic participants in responding to the concerns of the Consultation as a whole, speakers were invited to explore (from a Catholic point of view) the theological and practical aspects of the Church's mission in town and country, in light of the ideas presented in the study booklet, Ecumenical Designs.

These talks were given in special Catholic sessions held during the course of the three-day Consultation; and they are presented here in the hope that their publication will prove of value to the much larger group of people concerned with the Church's mission in town and country today.

Bernard Quinn

Washington, D.C.
January 15, 1968

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WILLIAM B. ASHDOWN

Town & Country in Crisis: Apostolic Problem

The Process of Urbanization and the Church's Responsibility

As a rule statistics are uninteresting. But this rule, like others, has exceptions. Statistics can be powerful. In fact I have come across a few that are so "punchy" that I am going to quote them at you right at the beginning of this paper.

In 1790 it is estimated that 80 percent of the American labor force was engaged in farming. By 1860 this percentage had diminished to 59 percent. In 1960 it was down to 6 percent.[1]

Between 1920 and 1950, 18.2 million Americans migrated from the farm. And there is every evidence that this out-migration has continued unabated since 1950.[2]

Between 1930 and 1955 more than 20,000 rural churches were closed down, and again there is every evidence that this trend has continued.[3]

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[1] Lee Taylor and Arthur R. Jones, Jr., Rural Life and Urbanized Society (New York: Oxford Press, 1964), pp. 207-208.

[2] Joseph J. Spengler, "Demographic Change in the South, 1940-1960," in Allan P. Sindler (ed.), Change in the Contemporary South (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1963), p. 31.

[3] Taylor and Jones, op. cit., p. 409.

These statistics point to a crisis in rural America - a gradual one, yes, but one which, particularly in recent years has become quite real. "How ya' gonna' keep 'em down on the farm?" This used to be the big question in both Protestant and Catholic conferences on the Church in rural America. Now the big question seems to be: How can the Church respond to a critical change in rural American society which has been taking place under its nose for decades?

It seems to me that one word sums up pretty well the crisis taking place in rural America, and, for that matter, in rural areas throughout the world. That word is "urbanization." Here I am using this word in its widest sense, not just in the sense of a progressively greater concentration of people in progressively smaller geographic boundaries. The process of urbanization here refers to a change in the totality of human civilization and culture. It is a transition from a rural to an urban way of life.

Every aspect of human life is involved in this change. It is such a complex phenomenon that to understand it just in our country we would probably have to make a survey of its history beginning with medieval Europe and trace its progress to present-day urban America.

Here, however, I am going to speak of this change only as it has affected town and country America since about the year 1930. The process of urbanization since that time has been particularly rapid and has had a powerful impact on every facet of life.

I must confess that my own understanding of this highly complex phenomenon is quite limited. At any rate, in a paper of this size only some of the highlights can be touched on, along with some of the more salient problems involved - problems which the wave of urbanization has left in its wake, producing a gradual, but genuine crisis for countless people. The hope is that by taking a hard look at this crisis we may be better able to situate the apostolate of the Church in town and county America today. A few remarks on the question of the Church's response to the present situation will be made at the conclusion of this paper.

In order to clarify the meaning of urbanization I have divided the process into four aspects: the demographic, the economic, the socio-political, and the psychic.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECT

One of the most visible signs of this process of urbanization is a tremendous amount of population movement in our nation and the new trends in the distribution of population resulting from this movement. American people today are on the move more than any other people in history and their movement has, in terms of geographic distribution, favored the development of an urban civilization.

This great urban-directed movement of people in recent years, however, is but the acceleration of a trend which was established earlier in American history. In 1790, 5.1 percent of the total population was urban, while 94.9 percent was rural. The nineteenth century saw a slow but steady urban growth, so that by 1900, 39.7 percent of the population was urban and 60.3 percent rural. In 1940, 56.3 percent was urban and 43.5 percent rural. Just twenty years later, in 1960, the urban population had jumped to 69.9 percent and the rural had dropped to 30.1 percent.[4]

Several historical reasons can be given for this trend. Among these, two are prominent: the fact that the early colonists came from a Europe which was already urban-oriented and undergoing an industrial revolution, and the fact that the winning of the Civil War by the North led to triumph of industrial over agricultural civilization in America and provided impetus to the industrialization of agriculture itself.[5]

Throughout the nineteenth century the United States had a small number of big cities sprinkled like islands in a vast rural sea of farms and prairies, hamlets, small towns and villages. The division between city and country was abrupt. A person could travel a few miles from the downtown sector of a large city and find himself surrounded by countryside.

In recent American history the outstanding demographic fact has been the phenomenal growth of what are called Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (S. M. S. A.). From 1900 to 1960 the percent of the nation's population in S. M. S. A. 's doubled. The 1960 census recognized 212 of these metropolitan areas. As a result of a continuing growth these great population clusters contained 63 percent of the population. Between 1940 and 1950 these giants captured 80 percent of the total population increase and 84 percent between 1950 and 1960. The non-metropolitan territory grew only 28 percent as fast.[6]

Furthermore, these metropolitan areas have tended to develop a more or less typical structure. At the core is the central city with its downtown sector of department stores and office buildings, its hi-rise apartment sectors, its industrial zones, and its tenement slums. Surrounding this core are the suburbs with main streets and shopping centers, residential areas and parks, schools and churches, some "clean" factories and office buildings, hospitals and clinics. Then, surrounding the suburbs is the outer perimeter, called variously "exurbia," "the rural-urban fringe," "the metropolitan fringe," etc. This fringe is usually an unplanned hodgepodge of farms and factories, houses and trailers, stores and service stations, motels and restaurants.

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4. U. S. Census Bureau, U. S. Census of Population 1960: Number of Inhabitants, United States Summary, Final Report PC (1)-1A (Washington, D. C.: 1961), pp. 1-4.

5. Taylor and Jones, op. cit., pp. 23-26.

6. Donald J. Bogue and Calvin L. Beale, "Recent Population Trends in the United States and Their Causes," in James H. Copp (ed.), Our Changing Rural Society (Ames: Univ. of Iowa Press, 1964), p. 76.

The division of city from country has been graduated.

This metropolitan growth, at first sight, might lead one to the conclusion that the United States is not only being urbanized, but will eventually become a "big city" civilization. More and more people, it seems, are being concentrated in less and less space. Does the exploding metropolis mean the progressive swallowing up of smaller communities in massive, anonymous collections of people such as we find in the central cities of our country? Is this not the logical conclusion of the whole urbanizing process? This question would seem to be relevant for any discussion of the future of an apostolate to town and country America.

In attempting to answer this question it must be pointed out that several facts contradict this first impression that the United States is becoming a totally "big city" civilization. The process of urbanization does not seem to be taking us this far.

First of all, the size of the S. M. S. A. has little to do with its rate of growth. S. M. S. A. 's of one million people or more grew at nearly the same rate as S. M. S. A. 's of less than 100,000. The difference in growth between the S. M. S. A. 's of various sizes are associated primarily with region rather than with size as such. Thus, between 1950 and 1960 (the last census) the rate of growth of Southern S. M. S. A. 's was actually greater than those of the North by 9. 6 percent.[7] The most highly urbanized area of the country, the Atlantic Metropolitan Belt, from Boston to Washington, D. C., including New York City, grew between 1950 and 1960 at a slower rate than the average growth rate of the nation.[8] This suggests that there may be a limit to urban concentration.[9]

The greatest percentage of growth actually occurred in the Pacific Southwest Region (50. 1 percent increase) and the Atlantic Flatwoods and Gulf Coastal Region of the South (48. 1 percent increase).[10] Evidently there are a lot of people buying all that property in Florida and Texas which is being advertized in the newspapers of Northern cities.

Secondly, the true focus of growth in the metropolitan area is not the central city but the suburban district and the rural-urban fringe. Along with the increase in population in metropolitan areas there has been a deconcentration of population within these areas themselves.[11] Then too, there is even a spill-over of population into the adjacent non-metropolitan environs in more densely settled regions. For example, in the South on the Gulf Coast the metropolitan population is spreading inland so that a great metropolitan fringe is developing in the southern portions of such traditionally rural states as Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina.[12]

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[7] Ibid., p. 81.
[8] Ibid., p. 80.
[9] Ibid., p. 89.
[10] Ibid., p. 73.
[11] Ibid., p. 81.

This movement of deconcentration, the flight to the suburbs, and the growth of peripheral areas indicates, among other things, that rural values are still attractive to the American people and have never been obliterated by the urbanization process. A kind of compromise is being made between urban and rural values with an attempt to find the best of two worlds without the drawbacks of either.[13]

Thirdly, another fact which is perhaps not widely appreciated is that the process of urbanization is also taking place outside the big metropolitan areas. In fact, the non-metropolitan urban areas grew between 1950 and 1960 at a rate of 25 percent, a rate almost equal to the rate of growth of the S. M. S. A. 's themselves. Even in areas remote from the S. M. S. A. 's where the rural parts of non-metropolitan areas were declining, the urban population increased substantially.[14] Small cities and towns which are sufficiently developed and well-situated have a great growth-potential even though they are not within the ambit of the S. M. S. A. 's. In structure they are quite similar to the S. M. S. A. but on a smaller scale, with central city or town, suburbs, and fringe.

Finally, what may be even less widely appreciated is that, in contrast to the rural farm population, the rural non-farm population has continued to grow. This population now totals 38. 4 million people. (Under the old census definition, this would have been 46. 5 million.) The rural non-farm population increased by 7. 2 million between 1950 and 1960.[15] In 1960 this rural non-farm population was nearly three times as large as the rural farm population, though as recently as 1940 it was only half as large.[16] In the South the rate of growth of this segment of the population has been actually faster than that of the general urban population and as dramatic as the metropolitan explosion although it has not received as much publicity.[17]

The greatest growth of the rural non-farm population is taking place on the rural-urban fringe or in areas in some kind of proximity to metropolitan and urban centers. One of the problems in these peripheral areas is the lack of planning for land use due to quick, over-night development.[18] (In one of these areas, for example, industrial

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12. Donald J. Bogue, "Population Growth in the United States," in Philip M. Hauser ed.), The Population Dilemma (Englewood Cliffs, N. J. : Prentice-Hall, 1963), p. 89.

13. Bogue and Beale, "Recent Population Trends," in Copp, op. cit., p. 82; Taylor and Jones op. cit., pp. 98 and 103.

14. Bogue and Beale, "Recent Population Trends," in Copp, op. cit., p. 82.

15. Olaf F. Larson and Everett M. Rogers, "Rural Society in Transition: The American Setting," in Copp, op. cit., p. 52.

16. Selz C. Mayo and C. Horace Hamilton, "Current Population Trends in the South," Social Forces, 42:1 (October, 1963), p. 81.

17. Spengler, op. cit., p. 31.

18. William E. Cole and Charles H. Miller, Social Problems: A Sociological Interpretation (New York: McKay, 1965), p. 163.

workers complained that they were being awakened in the morning by chickens on nearby farms.) These areas have only recently begun to develop and sociologists have only begun to take an interest in them. Actually, it may well be that they will become in the future the central focus for the town and country apostolate.

On the other hand, this increase in population in the metropolitan suburbs and fringe, non-metropolitan cities and towns, and rural non-farm population has taken place at the expense of two other segments of population.

One of these segments is the rural farm population which has continued to suffer rapid decline. Net migration (i.e. the difference between in-migration and out-migration) took 6.1 million of the nation's farm population in 1920-1930; 3.5 million in 1930-1940; and 8.6 million or 30.9 percent, in 1940-1950.[19] Because of changes in census definition in 1960, losses cannot be accurately calculated for the fifties; but there is no doubt that they are great. The out-migration of farm population has been particularly acute in the South. This may continue to mean out-migration from the region itself unless sufficient non-agricultural training and employment are made available.[20]

The other segment of population which has been losing substantially is the central city in metropolitan areas. These cities have not been holding their own in relation to the general increase of population in the United States. The population growth of these cities in the past, an object of civic pride and optimism, is no longer keeping pace with the growth in other sectors. Growth now recorded in these large central cities is mainly achieved through annexation of territory rather than internal increase.[21]

Furthermore, since their birth-rates have been well above replacement, the loss to these cities has been through out-migration to the suburbs and metropolitan periphery.[22]

The metropolitan explosion is therefore not a "big city" explosion. The fastest-growing cities in the nation are not the big ones, but those of 10,000 to 100,000 people. Together these medium-sized cities grew from 19.5 percent of the nation's total population in 1950 to 25.8 percent in 1960. Towns of 5,000 to 10,000 people held their own by growing at the national average rate of growth. Towns of 2,000 to 5,000 people experienced some absolute growth but at a rate below the national average. Towns below 2,000 dropped slightly in population and generally decreased greatly in future growth potential.[23]

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[19] Spengler, op. cit., p. 31.

[20] Ibid., p. 32.

[21] Bogue and Beale, "Recent Population Trends," in Copp, op. cit., p. 85.

[22] Ibid., p. 89.

[23] Ibid., p. 85.

The lack of growth in towns below 2,000 people is tied in with the post-World War II revolution in agriculture. These towns were important before this time as centers of supply and trade for surrounding farms. However, the number of farmers who remain need more equipment and supplies, and larger markets for selling their products. With the improvement in transportation they have been turning to larger centers of supply and marketing where they get better prices and wider selection.[24] The small town business man has been caught in the squeeze and the farm-supplying small town has dwindled.[25] Yet some small towns with reasons for existence other than agriculture have experienced growth.

The general pattern, however, is, in summary, a stagnation or decline in the largest and smallest places, a rapid growth in medium-sized places, and an average growth in places just above or below medium size.

THE ECONOMIC ASPECT

Urbanization also has its economic aspect. One of the greatest revolutions in the history of the United States has been the radical conversion of the economy from agricultural to industrial domination. In 1790, 80 percent of the American labor force was required for farming; in 1820, 72 percent; in 1860, 59 percent, and in 1960, 6 percent.[26]

Along with this drastic decline in the size of the farm labor force needed to feed and clothe the nation there has been a change in the agricultural operation itself. From the very beginning of its history agriculture in the United States has seen great progress in moving from traditional to scientific farming. But in recent years changes in the agricultural operation have become so great that, by and large, farming has become, instead of a way of life, one of many forms of business enterprise. The small, family-type, subsistence farm is rapidly becoming extinct in our country. Increased mechanization, changing social organization and other factors have replaced the small subsistence farm with the large agri-business, organized much in the manner of any industrial corporation.[27]

Then too, there has been a marked decline in the manpower needs of such basic industries as mining and lumbering. Increased mechanization and other changes in these operations have often been sudden and have tended to leave rural communities, which depended totally on these operations for employment, isolated, stranded and in desperate condition.[28]

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[24] Charles P. Loomis and J. Allen Beegle, Rural Sociology: The Strategy of Change (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1957), p. 437.

[25] Bogue and Beale, "Recent Population Trends," in Copp, op. cit., p. 113. Cf. Arthur J. Vidich and Joseph Bensman, Small Town in Mass Society (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1958), pp. 91-94.

[26] Taylor and Jones, op. cit., pp. 207-208.

[27] Ibid., pp. 204 ff.

Because of this decline in the manpower needs of farming, mining, and lumbering, there is proportionately greater poverty in the rural areas of our country than in the urban. Rural poverty is less visible than urban poverty and the tendency in our nation is to think of poverty in terms of our inner-city slums. The fact is, however, that rural America contains about 30 percent of the nation's population, but 46 percent of its poverty. In rural America 26.9 percent of the population is living in poverty as compared to 14.4 percent in the urban segment. About half of all poverty in the United States is rural.[29] The rural areas in most desperate need are the Southern tobacco and cotton areas, Appalachia, the Ozarks, the upper Great Lakes region, northern New England, and the Indian reservations.[30]

As far as farmers are concerned, their plight can be further defined by giving a summary of the economic problems they are now faced with in the new situation:

1. The high cost in initial capital investment for young men getting started in farming as an agri-business.

2. Low incomes received from many farm units and operations. The migrant workers, for example, are notoriously underpaid.

3. The attraction of city life, glamorized on the mass media, for young people. (4-H clubs and other organizations are needed now to create enthusiasm for farming.)

4. Difficulties for small to medium-sized farms to find labor of the number and quality desired and at feasible wages.

5. Increased burden of real estate taxes.

6. Persistence in some areas of such disadvantages as lack of good roads, adequate schools, and other rural institutions.[31]

Yet, the economic situation in rural America is not hopeless. As we have seen, the rural non-farm population is actually increasing rapidly. This is due largely to the fact that certain industries of a traditionally urban character are decentralizing into smaller cities and towns which better roads have made easily accessible.[32] The textile

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28. Bogue and Beale, "Recent Population Trends," in Copp, op. cit., p. 113.
29. U. S. Department of Agriculture, Rural People in the American Economy, Agricultural Economic Report No. 101, Economic Research Service (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1966), pp. 3, 17, 42-43.
30. Ibid., pp. 65-67.
31. Cole and Miller, op. cit., pp. 157-158.
32. Bogue and Beale, "Recent Population Trends," in Copp, op. cit., p. 113.

industry, for example, has to a great degree migrated from the large cities of the North to the rural districts of the South.

In recent years there has been a re-thinking within various industries of the question of plant location. With an increase in rapid transportation and communication, a high mobility of the population, the existence of mass markets, the availability of a large untapped rural labor force and natural power resources,and the union problems associated with large cities, the reasons for decentralizing industry into rural areas are often substantial. The net impact of this reassessment of the question of plant location has been the establishment of a new decentralizing trend in industry. Between 1950 and 1960 an estimated 30 percent of all industrial plants established were located in small towns or in the open country near small towns of less than 10,000 people.[33]

Rural areas have also furnished the sites for many military installations and research facilities. Dams for electric power, a basic part of our economy, are usually located, of necessity, in rural areas.The atomic power plant, which holds great possibilities as a future resource, may be a largely rural phenomenon.

This movement of industry to rural areas, while good and needed, is not, however, without its problems. Some areas still do not have adequate roads and highways for this kind of development. In many towns incoming industry is discouraged by guardians of the status quo, but this resistance is diminishing in some places. Working wives and mothers, along with male unemployment, due to certain kinds of industrial operations, can often be a real problem for the rural family. The exclusive domination of an area by a single form of industry is a danger well-known to rural people.

Furthermore, the adaptation of people with agricultural backgrounds to the discipline of industrial work sometimes creates problems. Rural people have usually been hard workers, but they are not used to working for someone else, especially an impersonal corporation. (In one industry near where I lived in rural Georgia, trading stamps are issued to the wives of industrial workers for getting their husbands to work on time.) Some rural people would almost rather starve in a small family business, than work in a factory.

But perhaps the biggest problem of all is the lack of availability of the kind of technical training that industry requires today. The setting up of technical schools in rural areas and various government training programs have helped in this regard, but a lot still needs to be done if rural people are to find employment in our highly technical and specialized economy.

Besides industry, a final important source of rural economic development has been the expansion of rurally-located recreation and retirement areas such as man-made reservoirs, national and state parks.[34] How this kind of development can affect the rural economy is illustrated by the case of Bagnell Dam and its reservoir, the Lake of the Ozarks. Camden county, where this dam was built, had known a decline in population and economy for fifty years previous to the dam's construction. With the coming of the dam population jumped 16 percent during the fifties and business began to flourish.[35]

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[33] Taylor and Jones, op. cit., p. 114.

[34] Ibid., pp. 129 ff.

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL ASPECT

Perhaps we can best visualize the tremendous impact of the socio-political aspect of the urbanization process in rural America if we first picture to ourselves what situation prevailed there in the last century. Rural America was then composed, in general, of thousands of small towns, villages, and hamlets surrounded by small, family-type farms. These small communities were largely isolated, self-contained, and self-sufficient. Agriculture, as we have seen, was the basis of the economy.

Local towns were centers of commerce, marketing and supply. Small one-room churches at these centers and sprinkled everywhere through the countryside were the centers of social life. Education was limited to the "little red schoolhouse." Conversation and discussion were centered on local affairs, perhaps around the pot-bellied stove in the general store. Politics was strictly democratic and centered in the little meeting house. The local community controlled its own political destiny autonomously; there was only minimal contact with state or national government.

Family and kinship ties were strong, and, in general, social relationships were primary, face-to-face, and informal. Life was slow and well-patterned from the cradle to the grave. People did not suffer from "identity crises" - everyone knew his place and role and pretty well conformed to it. The world of consciousness did not extend much beyond what was happening in the next town. Many local, provincial, and regional peculiarities of language and style of life were everywhere in evidence.

The story of the urbanization of rural America has been the story of the rapid integration of these little communities into a massive urban society. The railroads came first, linking together many a village, town, and city. Then came the telegraph and telephone. Rural electrification (R. E. A.) became one of the great success stories of American history, making the use of many of the products of an industrial society possible for rural people. Every farm family wanted a mail order catalog and the money to buy the shiny new things pictured in it.

The automobile and the truck, slick roads and highways, further tied local communities to the developing urban centers. The mass media: newspapers, magazines, radio, and finally television, opened up new worlds of awareness and interest.

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[35] Bogue and Beale, "Recent Population Trends," in Copp, op. cit., p. 114.

Federal and state governmental agencies began to exert more and more influence. Schools, churches, and hospitals became increasingly subject to urban standards. The tempo of life speeded up and local peculiarities of life-style yielded to cultural universals. Even the rural South, a long-time isolated region, is now converging with the national pattern.[36] Rural isolation has broken down and rural people have become conscious of themselves as part of a larger urban world, the values of which they have come to share.

All this has meant a new form of socio-political organization in which the relative importance of primary,informal, group relationships such as were found in kinship group, local village, town, or country has declined in favor of the increased importance of formalized social relationships such as are found in business firms and associations, social service and governmental agencies, consolidated schools, churches, hospitals, and other organizations. Political, economic, educational, social service, and even religious institutions have become more centralized and dominated by national metropolitan standards. This has, of course, made for better business and government, higher standards of education and health, and a more adequate religious ministry.[37]

Yet all this has not been without its difficulties,and problems of adjustment go unsolved. The transition has been rapid and the crisis continues.

Politically speaking, rural people have lost a great deal of their autonomy. Political power has tended to shift from the community and county to the state and federal levels. The big decisions are not made on the local level but higher up. The struggle over "reapportionment" in many state legislatures between urban and rural interests has been a sign of this shift. Rural people in health, education or welfare work know that they do not set the standards for their professions. Likewise, people in rural industries know that they are controlled by offices in metropolitan centers.[38]

Even farmers, traditionally independent, must gear their production to mass markets and must submit to national and state governmental control if they wish to increase their incomes.

The technique of government is also different in an urbanized society and rural people often experience great difficulty in adjusting to less democratic and more bureaucratic forms.[39] With more and more federal programs being established in rural areas the big cry is, "How do you deal with those people in Washington?" Rural people have to constantly assure themselves that they are dealing with real people in the federal government and not just with computers.

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[36] Thomas D. Clark, The Emerging South (New York: Oxford Press, 1961), pp. 271 ff; Mayo and Hamilton, loc. cit., p. 77.

[37] Larson and Rogers, op. cit., pp. 57-59.

[38] Ibid., pp. 55-57.

[39] Cole and Miller, op. cit., pp. 161-162.

Besides, there is a great lack of creative leadership in many rural areas. Potential leaders often succumb to the lure of metropolis and leave local communities depleted, helpless, unable to exert even that influence which is possible in the present situation. The industrially-employed rural non-farm people are probably the biggest hope,[40] but these people, often from outside the area and without real roots, are slow to get involved in local affairs. If these people can be brought to see their responsibility here, they may be the political hope of the future.

The depersonalization of social relationships also constitutes a problem, particularly for the middle-aged and elderly people. "People don't sit and visit like they used to." "Doctors don't really care about you any more." "A man's word isn't worth anything anymore; now you've got to draw up a contract. All this legal mumbo-jumbo!" "Children nowadays are different; you can't really understand them." "Young people are not courteous and respectful like they used to be." "The churches are too big and too organized nowadays; I don't feel I belong anymore." Opinions like these are commonly voiced and often deeply felt in rural areas.

The family is less important socially. Kinship bonds are weaker, family "get-togethers" fewer, family members more ego-centric. Rural families are becoming smaller.[41] The divorce rate among rural people is higher than formerly and does not now differ significantly from the urban rate.[42] Yet divorces are more tragic in rural areas and take a greater toll in guilt feelings and mental sickness.

In the old, isolated community deviant behavior was contained by strong patterns of ethical and social conformity in the family, church, and community. With the loss of such containment in a more anonymous and liberal urban society, crime and juvenile delinquency are on the rise, and more police protection is needed.[43] Then too, less recreational opportunities are available for young people in rural areas, and the lack of communication between adults and youth is as great as anywhere else.

As the process of urbanization continues we can expect rural-urban differences in socio-political organization to pass and the nation at large to become more culturally universal. In the meantime rural people will have a difficult "period of adjustment."

As regards the problem of race-relations, only the South possesses a substantial percentage of Negroes in rural areas. In those districts where Negroes outnumber Caucasians there is often open hostility and conflict. These are the areas where the Ku Klux Klan is likely to be active. In those areas where Negroes are in the minority and are not imagined to be a threat, there is usually little open hostility, but segregation is nonetheless almost complete, except for a token integration in schools and hospitals in order to meet federal standards.

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[40] Ibid., p. 159.
[41] Taylor and Jones, op. cit., pp. 347-348.
[42] Ibid., p. 351.
[43] Walter L. Slocum, Agricultural Sociology (New York: Harper, 1962), pp. 224-225.

Under the surface there is a deep-seated fear of such things as integrated housing or recreational facilities, and especially of interracial sexual interest and marriage, the really big "bugaboo" which conditions all thinking on race in the South.[44]

Rural churches in the South are almost all segregated. Churches there have traditionally provided for courtship contacts between young men and women, and, in general, represent the closest form of social contact in the local community. Consequently, unless the present mentality towards race-relations changes in them, through an appeal to social conscience, they may be among the last institutions to integrate.[45]

In general, the process of urbanization has greatly influenced the churches of rural America. Religion in America was originally a dominantly rural phenomenon. Prayer and worship were nature-oriented and centered on agricultural problems and needs. The frontier churches were largely of the small, exclusive, sect-type. Face-to-face, informal group relationships were dominant. The ministry was usually untrained. But through the nineteenth and especially the twentieth century the churches followed the people to the city and then to the suburbs.[46] In the process they have become larger, better organized, dominantly formal in group relationships, more open and cooperative in spirit, and led by a professional ministry.

The churches that remained in the rural areas, however, still suffered from the inadequacies of the frontier style and refused to adjust to the new urbanizing trend. Small, inadequate town and country churches closed by the thousands. Some Protestant denominations, early in this century, set up special town and country departments to deal with the situation.[47]

Efforts have been made and are being made to consolidate churches, to form various kinds of church unions, and to promote cooperation among the churches in rural areas. Only in this way can adequate numbers, finances, and ministry be achieved to support the efficient, well-organized and specialized type of church program that an urbanized society demands.[48]

This rural church movement has met with partial success. Various forms of cooperation in the area of social action, for instance, are in evidence. Various types of church union have been tried and some experiments have met with success.[49] Yet, great problems have emerged in these endeavors and the movement still has a long way to go.

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[44] Cf. John Dollard, Caste and Class in a Southern Town (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1949).

[45] Cf. Samuel S. Hill, Jr. Southern Churches in Crisis (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1967).

[46] Cf. Shirley E. Greene, Ferment on the Fringe (Philadelphia: Christian Education Press, 1960).

[47] Taylor and Jones, op. cit., pp. 408-409.

[48] Ibid., p. 412.

Small rural churches, those which most need to cooperate or consolidate, are less inclined to do so than the bigger ones.[50] Then there are obstacles to cooperation due to differences of culture, temperament, theological trend, and traditional doctrinal conviction.[51] Finally, there is the typical rural fear of the kind of organized bigness which depersonalizes and standardizes human relationships and destroys the sense of group belongingness and cohesion.

Some of these difficulties seem to be quite valid and must be considered seriously in any effort towards interchurch cooperation or union. Other obstacles seem illusory, due to hidebound and prejudiced attitudes, or the result of just plain smugness and apathy.

The South, again, is a special problem area in this regard. Because of its isolation from movements in the rest of the nation it is still dominated by the exclusivist sect-type religion of the rural frontier. The situation there is truly critical.[52] Some efforts are being made on the denominational level to change this condition, but this will take time to filter down to the local level because of the strong tradition of congregational independence which dominates this region.

THE PSYCHIC ASPECT

The process of urbanization has brought rural people into a new world of heightened and expanded horizons of consciousness. Through direct contacts with the larger society, and, especially, through the influence of the mass media, the world of the rural people has exploded from a simple, static, well-patterned and slow-moving local community to a massive, complex, confusing, rapidly changing and dynamic metropolitan and cosmopolitan civilization. This expansion of consciousness has been a tremendous advance, but it has happened so rapidly that the toll in mental and emotional suffering is great.

Rural people live constantly in the shadow of metropolis; they now feel themselves to be on the fringe of civilization, living in "outer barbaria." The mass media originate in metropolis and deal with metropolitan affairs. Rural people, at least the more intelligent of them, know they are not "where the action is." They have largely lost control of their destiny, and feel, down deep, an ambivalent attitude of dependence and resentment towards the giant metropolis which has put them in the shadow.[53]

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[49] See Bernard Quinn, The Protestant Approach to Town & Country: A Study-Guide for Catholics (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, 1967), pp. 13 ff.

[50] David O. Moberg, The Church as a Social Institution (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962), p. 245.

[51] Ibid., pp. 258-259.

[52] Hill, op. cit., passim.

The one-time romanticized image of wholesome, tranquil small-town life which once dominated this country has been transformed in song and story to the image of excitement and adventure in the big city. And, just as adolescents achieve independence from their parents by going through a phase of hostility, so the young urban civilization shows contempt for its rural roots until it has achieved the self-confidence of a complete emotional break.

In recent decades the American attitude has become dominantly anti-rural. This is an attitude, not of hostility, but of supercilious contempt. The wholesomeness and attractiveness of life in the small town has been debunked. In our literature and mass media the small town is "Peyton Place" or at best "Dullsville, U. S. A." Today the provincialism and torpor of the small town are condescendingly taken for granted. This change of image is the result of an effort begun in earnest in the 1910's and 20's by such writers as Edgar Lee Masters, Sinclair Lewis, Sherwood Anderson and Theodore Dreiser.[54]

The farmer, in particular, has suffered a tremendous loss of prestige. At one time in this country the farmer was considered the backbone of the nation. To be called a "hick" or even a "farmer" today is not flattery. This, of course, is way out of proportion to the contribution the farmer still makes to our society. It is estimated that 60 percent of American business activity involves the sale and processing of agricultural products.[55]

Rural people know also that they are culturally deprived. Education-wise the land-grant colleges have been their salvation.[56] But, nonetheless, education, both in quality and level, lags far behind metropolis. Then too, one does not ordinarily find top-quality libraries, museums, theatres, concert halls, etc. in small towns. While there is some development of the fine arts in small towns, this cannot compete with the creativity of metropolis.

Another problem is the disproportionately great number of aged people in rural areas due to the out-migration of the young.[57] These people often suffer from isolation and loneliness and strengthen the impression in the young that rural people are "yesterday's people."

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[53] Vidich and Bensman, op. cit., pp. 102-107.

[54] Max Lerner, America as a Civilization: The Basic Frame, Vol. I (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1966), p. 152.

[55] Cole and Miller, op. cit., p. 159.

[56] Taylor and Jones, op. cit., pp. 384 ff.

[57] Bogue and Beale, "Recent Population Trends," in Copp, op. cit., pp. 93-95.

As a result of all this a cloud of fatalism and inferiority feeling hangs over many a rural community. Unhealthy patterns of escape and withdrawal from life are evident in terms of alcoholism, and mental and emotional sickness of every kind. While there are no statistics on this, it would be a safe guess that there is at least as much, if not more, mental sickness in rural areas as in urban.[58]

Everything depends on whether rural people regain their self-respect and confidence in the future. It seems to me that these people have, in this regard, much the same psychic problem as the depressed people of our metropolitan slums, although this is not publicized because our mass media originate in metropolis. Which is worse: to feel that one is at the bottom of metropolis looking upward, or to feel that one is on its fringe looking inward? Both peoples are living in the shadows.

THE VISION OF THE FUTURE METROPOLIS IN AMERICA

The American past, as we have seen, is rural. Americans have come from the farm, some long ago, others more recently. Under the impulse of a new vision of an urban society which America possessed, at least vaguely, from the beginning, cities have been gradually created. This has produced a dialectic of value: the rural thesis, the urban antithesis. At the present time we are witnessing the triumph of this urban antithesis. Of the rural thesis only fragments remain.

I myself believe that this is a dialectic of growth. To attempt to return to the old rural society now would be nothing but sentimentality, a terrific evasion of responsibility. Urbanization is a form of maturation; it holds great possibilities for the future development of mankind such as the old rural society could never hope to offer. I personally will have nothing to do with rural romanticism. Most rural romantics give the impression they have never actually lived in town or country.

Furthermore, I believe that this dialectic of growth is not of the Hegelian or Marxist variety. It is a creation of the free human spirit under the providence of God, not the pre-determined evolution of Matter or Idea. This growth is not inevitable but due to the free decisions of men who have caught a vision of future possibilities. The ultimate reality behind this growth is not the deterministic, "historical" unfolding of Matter or Idea, but the direction of a personal God who judges and forgives, who guides and inspires, who calls and recalls man to work for a better society, but, at the same time, lets and enables man to be man, that is, lets him freely and responsibly choose his future. God and man move together in and through history towards an open and transcendent future.

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[58] Lerner, op. cit., p. 154.

The rural-urban dialectic, then, insofar as it is meaningful in a Christian context, represents a free, creative dialectic, one for which man must assume responsibility. Man must decide what sort of future civilization he wants.

Now it seems to me that not only is the vision of returning to the old rural society grossly inadequate, but so also is the vision of urban society which has developed, the vision of "mass" society. If the old rural society can be criticized as rigidly conformist, property and nature-centered, familistic, private and exclusive, provincial, individualistic, fatalistic, closed, stagnant and immobile, traditional and hidebound, mythological and mystical, smug, dull, crude and vulgar, egalitarian, uncreative, sentimental and simplistic, then the present urban society can also be criticized as normless, rootless, purposeless, collectivistic, bureaucratic and technocratic, anonymous and impersonal, artificial and rationalistic, superficial, libertarian, materialistic and grasping, ego-centric, public and transparent, competitive, hostile and violent, dissipated, anxious, phrenetic, cold and indifferent, frustrated and contemptuous. This society is not merely urban; it is scornfully anti-rural.

The flight from the central city to the suburbs is a rejection of what the city has become; it is an attempt to bring back something of what the old rural society at its best represented: a stable rhythm of life, privacy, the small, face-to-face community life and close personal relationships, a high estimate of the individual person regardless of social status, tranquility, property and roots, a feeling for nature and the elemental, a wholesome family life, a religion to interpret the ultimate, all-encompassing mystery of life, a stable code of ethical standards, a romantic vision, etc.

But, as Gibson Winter and others have pointed out, this flight to the suburbs is also a tremendous evasion of responsibility, an attempt to return to the rural womb. The central city is only being "used" by the suburbanite. This means, in practice, that the people who are "trapped" there are left to rot.

If a synthesis is to arise out of the rural-urban dialectic, it cannot by-pass the phase of urbanization. The new metropolis cannot be an artificial compromise of the rural and the urban such as we have in the suburbs. The old rural values must be integrated into the new civilization, not treated as another compartment of life to which one can retreat. This is to say that the rural-urban dialectic must be "overcome." This means a leap foreward through the urbanization process, not around it. The only way the vision of the "new creation" as metropolis can be achieved is through struggle, suffering, and sacrifice.

And just as the people of the inner city have been forgotten so have the people of the old rural society. These people have also been left to rot. Here also is an evasion of responsibility. These people, too, must be brought out of the shadows into the light of the new metropolitan civilization.

In entering metropolis these people will not only be benefited themselves, they will have much to bring with them. Many of the old rural values are genuine values and humanity will suffer if they are lost. Some of our new urbanologists recognize this and are trying to integrate these values into the new metropolitan synthesis. "Metropolis" does not mean "monopolis."

THE APOSTOLATE OF THE CHURCH IN TOWN & COUNTRY

The Church's mission is to implant the perennial truths and values of the Gospel in the new civilization. What the Church can do to attack the problems of town and country America directly will be quite limited but important. These problems are big, really big. The Church can be intimidated by the sheer massiveness and complexity of the problems, and thus do nothing. But as the saying goes, "It is better to light one candle than curse the darkness." The Church in any town and country situation can establish priorities, isolate specific problems, however modest, and get to work. This kind of involvement will be necessary in our society in order to preach the Gospel effectively. It is no longer possible to preach at the world from a detached, aloof standpoint. It is perhaps not too late to get in on the ground floor of the new civilization - but it is already late.

Then too, without any of the old rural romanticism of the past, the Church in town and country can work towards the integration of genuine rural values into the new civilization.

As to the preaching of the Gospel itself, one of the most important aspects of this in the present situation is the calling of the world to its own responsibilities. The Church must be, not a club for the like-minded, but an agent of social conscience. The prophetic aspect of the Gospel must be preached. In a period of rapid change such as the present, the temptation is to think that the new civilization will happen automatically by some kind of "law of inevitable progress." It will not. And if it does, we can rest assured it will be the wrong kind of civilization. It will not reflect the kingdom of God in history.

Another temptation is to think that "they," usually meaning the government or some other big agency, will do the right kind of job. But we have no guarantee of this. The Church must enter into this process of change if we want the new civilization to adumbrate the kingdom of God. Look at what happened in Nazi Germany when the Church turned over its responsibilities to the "new order" of the state. Could something similar happen here in America? You bet it could. Americans are not essentially different from Germans, and are just as subject to demonic ideologies.

Finally, the new civilization will not be achieved without suffering and the constant burden of free decision and guilt. But with God there is always hope, inspiration, forgiveness, love. We are never bound or enclosed in the failures of the past. The future is open and God can do "new things" in and through His people. The Gospel is not a "no exit" sign, but a sign of the power of renewal. The priestly aspect of the

Gospel is just as essential in the present situation as the prophetic, and all Christians are priests in mediating God's grace to each other and to the world. Grace without judgment is "cheap grace"; judgment without grace is "dead judgment."

ERNEST J. FIEDLER

Present Protestant Ecumenical Approaches to Town & Country, and Possible Catholic Points of Contact

Theological Imperatives and Boundaries for Cooperation in the "Ecumenical Planning Process"

As a point of embarkation toward further pioneering for the "Pilgrim Church" in its effort to understand God and man, and to localize attention within a general frame of reference the following quotation from Ecumenical Designs, the Consultation study document, will serve as well as any:

> In each generation the imperatives for the church must be reevaluated and redefined. The church must also be revitalized to accept the challenges of the new definitions and evaluations if it is to be an authoritative agent in the process of redemption for mankind. The advancement of man's technical knowledge and skills which has catapulted him into a new and sometimes awesome responsibility to the resultant new society; the rise of ideologies whose god is in the image of man and the state; the possibilities of life being created and/or controlled through scientific development; the capability of man to destroy the world he did not create all place demands upon the church to fulfill the purposes of God in such an age by showing the way of moral responsibility in its continued development.
>
> As has been stated repeatedly... the church cannot fulfill its leadership role in setting moral requirements at this juncture in history through a continuation of its divisiveness. The many separate voices of the church

> are lost in the din of confusion as the strides gained in man's search for new horizons are made without adherence to a moral interpretation. New approaches to the needs of man in the realm of his spiritual and moral requirements must be made and it is absolutely essential that they be made in unity by the church. If such unity demands a restructuring of the institution, so be it, for man can be lost through rigidity and the church will thus fail God and the society God seeks to save.[1]

Various citations from the documents of the II Vatican Council could be offered to illustrate the desirability of Roman Catholic cooperation in such efforts. From them may be seen more than permissiveness; in fact a clear mandate is evident for those of the Roman Catholic persuasion looking for impetus and direction. For example:

> Insofar as religious conditions allow, ecumenical activity should be furthered in such a way that without any appearance of indifference or of unwarranted intermingling on the one hand, or of unhealthy rivalry on the other, Catholics can cooperate in a brotherly spirit with their separated brethren, according to the norms of the Decree on Ecumenism. To the extent that their beliefs are common, they can make before the nations a common profession of faith in God and in Jesus Christ. They can collaborate in social and in technical projects as well as in cultural and religious ones. Let them work together especially for the sake of Christ, their common Lord. Let His Name be the bond that unites them! This cooperation should be undertaken not only among private persons, but also, according to the judgment of the local Ordinary, among Churches or ecclesial Communities and their enterprises.[2]

It is to be noted that such cooperation is not listed only in the categories of social, technical and cultural projects, but in the religious category as well. This cooperative effort is not to be restricted to individuals, but is to be undertaken among the churches or ecclesial communities; therefore, the involvement of the structural or institutional church is understood.

Basic to an overall consideration is recognition that the church as institution is shaped by society. This is simply a fact of life, historically clear enough but admitted

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1. Ecumenical Designs: Imperatives for Action in Non-Metropolitan America (New York: Steering Committee, 1967), p. 169. [This study document is available through CARA.]

2. Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, n. 15. All quotations from Council documents are from Walter M. Abbott (ed.), The Documents of Vatican II (New York: Herder and Herder, Association Press, Guild Press, America Press, 1966). [Used by permission.]

by many churchmen today only with fear, uncertainty or considerable qualification.

Symptomatic of the quickened pace of human progress in this age, it now seems strange that some of our more enlightened religious leaders of only a generation ago were so dedicated to concepts with cultural and theological implications now recognized as culturally and socially naive and theologically narrow. Attractive though many of the assets of rural America were a generation or two ago, the objective observer must admit that the attempt to return to them today is a kind of nostalgic dreaming that creates a withdrawal from reality. Many inhabitants of contemporary urban America still, perhaps unconsciously, cherish a memory of a lost childhood in a small town that seems bathed in the glow of a serene, more simple way of life. And on their part rural Americans were convinced that democracy was purer, business more honest, and life less corrupt in the country than in the city. This mental attitude is still observable today. Called Agrarian Fundamentalism, it believes, in brief, that human and religious values are best realized in a rural atmosphere.

Socially and culturally an awakening to changing structures had to begin, and the transition to new structures became inescapable with the spread of automobiles, shopping centers, central grain elevators, consolidated schools, etc. In such a process we must realize that theologically, resistance to change and canonization of a rural or any other way of life is narrow. It simply, in fact, restricts the Incarnational process to one way of life. For centuries we have taught that Christ was not destined only for those alive in his time, but is destined to progressively "become flesh" -- concrete in all human life. The Incarnational process is not attached to the status-quo. Reluctance to admit progress and development in human life is perhaps at best childishly nostalgic, but it also seriously weakens the force of growth and renewal that the Christian ideal claims.

And to translate such principles to contemporary implementation, we must know the society in which we would hope to "incarnate" the church. That rural America is in reality over-churched would seem a rather obtrusive phenomena. Yet it has not been honestly recognized, for, while grain-elevators, businesses and schools have consolidated, the physical presence of numerous individual Christian churches is relatively unchanged. One might say that while general stores have not multiplied to meet the needs of a new era, but have instead died as individual entities to find more vigorous and fruitful new life as the shopping center, the churches have stood determinedly in their autonomous denominational singularity and multiplicity as a pathetic sign of the church's inability or unwillingness to meet the changing times. Facts of life like financial necessity rap insistently at the door of ecclesiastical buildings just as they have at the door of the schools and general stores, but the churches, like pathetic, almost senile creatures still seem to be deaf and blind. We cannot support present facilities, we cannot offer salaries to priest/ministers that will permit the capable to become interested. Many have considered the rural ministry as merely a stepping-stone to the city church. And those priest/ministers waiting for the return of a "happy past" that will never return have in their waiting, grown lazy, unoccupied, discouraged. Many have left; others die, and no clergyman replaces them, so a lay leader less educationally competent than his aging predecessor manages to carry the level of relevance and excellence still lower. And still we have a multiplicity of individual, denominational, autonomous churches with dwindling congregations refusing to recognize the signs of the times long ago recognized by other institutions. Perhaps most pathetic of all, as other institutions have moved away from the proliferated church facilities, these buildings are left stripped, standing like a stark, tragic profile -- divided, autonomous, defensive, and basically miserly, mired in what is increasingly evident as a travesty in the presentation of the face of Christ to the world. Our nakedness should force us to take refuge; perhaps necessity will cause us to beg for sustenance - a strange paradox for the institution in the community that should lead as the source of redemptive life.

Why are we so reluctant to realize that the social body of man has changed, is changing, and will continue to change and persist in hearkening back to old points of contact which may have been good, even useful, but never were and never will be universal?

In point of fact, the Christian communities seem to be personifying the apocalyptic situation about which Christ warned. All and each seem to be saying -- "I am Christ, we are Christ" -- making inevitable the recollection of Christ's warning: "If they tell you 'Here is Christ' or 'there is Christ' -- Do not believe them!" Modern man to a great degree is surely to be exonerated from his failure to recognize the living redemptive presence of Him who died speaking of unity and love.

And all the while the body of the secular world is growing apart from the church while we tarry and worry to the point of neurosis. In fact, it would seem that we have permitted the metamorphosis of some of the earliest Christological heresies. They addressed themselves to dividing the individual nature of Christ's person; we have permitted a restatement in fact, addressed to His continuing redemptive presence in the Christian community.

Concomitant with this is the trend toward rationalism and away from the old "simple faith" -- sometimes looked upon as superstition. Running parallel is the well-documented fact that people with a parochial world view have little ability to separate the symbol of their faith (for example, the church building) from the faith itself. Combining the two, people increasingly expect the priest/minister to stay within his little ceremonial patterns and not clumsily to intrude on the gut issues of life. And he, with his parochial, denominational education too frequently and too easily becomes the priest presiding over a folk-religion. This has also been expressed in another way: rural or agrarian fundamentalism is really nothing more than "a man, the weather and his crops." The weather, in this trinity, was that element most frequently associated with God. And obviously today it has come to mean less and less as man has learned simply to turn on a sprinkler rather than pray for rain.

Sociological-ecclesiological studies, both Protestant and Catholic have noted that the trend of that society which, as we say, will shape the church as institution, is moving away from neighborhood familiarity toward a larger, more complex and impersonal form. (That is, it is moving away from what has come to be called "Gemeinschaft" and toward "Gesellschaft.") These words have become a part of the jargon used to distinguish in the first instance the type of society that was practically an end in itself, formed of a primary grouping with many unplanned projects of life. It is unconsciously considered sacred and personalistic; it carried with it a diffused sense of responsibility. The second type of human community, that more observable today (the Gesellschaft), denotes a grouping of people that is more a means than an end -- largely formed of secondary groups with planned activities. Far more secular, it is impersonalistic and dictates specific responsibilities. And, the trend toward secularization in this process is clear in studies from both Roman Catholic and Protestant origins. There seems to be little realism in denying the trends. If factual, this then is a context in which the church must operate.

Unfortunately, however, we seem to have lost awareness of the fact that the church as an *institutional structure is changeable.* As a matter of fact, we may with truth say that the institutional structure of the church should depend on society at any given moment. That this has been the case in history is evident both from the Scriptures and secular history. Paul had to struggle to change the institutional structure beginning to grow from Peter's view; and the whole period of the Reformation is another very evident illustration. If the church as institutional structure is, in fact, dependent upon society, it would seem that the institutional structure has then a built-in *obsolescence,* even though it may have vast empires and bureaucratic power structures within it. Defensive reluctance to recognize this undoubtedly has been a significant factor in the situation that presently persists. Anyone who wishes can observe institutional structures in various Christian denominations, structures born from divided loyalties, with a proliferation and overlapping of programs that do nothing so much as sap the energy of the total church.

The church claims that the uniqueness of its role in society is its defined purpose as a redemptive agency for society. However, it ceases to redeem society as it becomes alien to it and when society no longer finds it seriously relevant. Must this not be at least a tentative cause of the state of *rural* American churches, and must we not consider it after hearing rather consistently that two-thirds of the local churches in nonmetropolitan America are in a state of decline?

Though divided, these churches were built in the middle of a meaningful community. However, it was a community within which people *walked* to church and frequently to the store and school; the more distant used a horse and buggy. But now the automobile alone has caused a complete change in this once viable community structure. People will drive a great distance to work and to shop because of better wages and better services; they probably will do so increasingly for better "church services" as well.

Should we not repeat that the country store has become the supermarket and the shopping center? The one-room school house is gone; efficiency and better educational possibilities have brought about consolidated schools. (The litany could be continued at some length.) And yet, the church, also living in the heart of these mutations seems to have changed little -- seems, in fact, to lack an awareness of the changing social structures of the day. Or, it has refused to consider itself a structure of society subject to the same changing conditions. As we have said, the country store and the one-room school house have moved out of the center of the small neighborhood community, but their departure has left in stark visibility a proliferation of churches. While some may worry about the "under-churched" state of urban America, it is painfully evident (and should have been long ago) that the situation in rural America is decisively the opposite. Rural American communities are over-churched. The existing buildings alone can demonstrate it.

If we look thoughtfully at these multiple buildings, should we not begin to realize that denominationalism has built their multiplicity? And, if so, to ask honestly if denominationalism's opposite might not solve the problem. Something has kept these structures from responding to the forces that have changed other rural structures. Is it really the redemptive unity of the church? Is it not rather the defensive strength of denominationalism and a myopia of vision that has made the church consider itself strangely exempt from forces that affect the rest of society? The church with its multiple structures becomes less and less intelligible while other social institutions have sought meaning through the consolidation of structures. Could we not then at least tentatively consider the possibility that denominationalism is functionally dead? If so, it would seem that denominationalism must begin to give way to interdenominationalism at least. But probably, because it is already late, must we not jump all the way to consideration of ecumenism as the best principle presently available? Clearly business, transportation, communications and politics have been consolidating and merging resources for decades. Are not the same trends to be recognized as a fact of life affecting the body of mankind by the church? Yet, in general the opposite has been true. Most of the church's planning has continued to be unilateral, for the basic purpose of increasing denominational advantage. Of course, it is true that there has grown a tolerance, or a spirit of "friendly competition"; but still, denominationalism seems to be the hallmark that guides structural considerations. Even the most simple social structures recognize that unilateral "denominational" planning frequently fails simply because another unilateral plan may cancel out the first.

It seems reasonable, therefore, that the church needs a comprehensive, cooperative, ecumenical plan to survive with the least deformity in rural America. In such a comprehensive plan to gather factual data, the church should cooperatively spend money for research just as industry has done, and use the findings in unity in attempting to solve the problem. (Nor should we overlook the fact that, although industry has spent billions of dollars in research and experiment, seventy-five percent of the experiments are failures. The other twenty-five percent, expensive though it may seem at first sight, is what has kept business and industry not only financially profitable in the present, but progressing into the future with intelligent hope.) Without doubt we must subject ourselves to a searching examination of self-evaluation, and recognizing present social patterns, unite to work cooperatively as we experiment and spend money on cooperative research.

Departing from such general considerations and turning our attention to concrete propositions as directed, it would be well to take note of a number of experiments in Protestant denominations.

But initially let us review some of the suggestions of rural sociologists and theorists. Two of the most creative insights deal with detailed considerations of what have come to be called "regions" and "functional economic areas." A region is defined as an area of from one-hundred to one-thousand miles in radius around one or more metropolitan centers. Within each region there may be a dozen or more functional economic areas (FEA's). Within the FEA, no point is more than one hour from the center. FEA's are normally contained within states and consist of at least two or more independent communities. Generally they will have a trade center, a mass media marketing area, regional, governmental and economic insitutions, and specialty centers such as medical, hospital and legal. Sociologists feel that this type of area structure is emerging as a result of the factors mentioned earlier: the advent of the auto, regional daily newspapers, new wholesale outlets, and mass media advertising. If in reality the FEA's are a structural phenomenon of the American rural scene and a basis for reasonable planning, the church also needs to confront this fact and to plan accordingly. There are immediately obvious practical problems. Among the first is the recognition that most church judicatory administrative boundaries are not concurrent with either the regions or the FEA's. Restructuring or a new dimension of cooperation would evidently be necessary at the judicatory level!

For the moment, however, let us pass from this concern to more strictly local considerations. Some of the experiments among the Protestant churches which have been tried recently, and which would, if they became widespread, logically link to regional and FEA development are:

1. The Yoked Parish-- In this arrangement the pastor is shared by two or more geographically proximate congregations, for economic reasons. Sometimes the arrangement crosses denominational lines, but solely for the reason of economy.

2. The Parish--Several churches of one or more denominations, living administratively as a single congregation, meeting in one or more places.

3. The Federated Church--The churches of different denominations pool their resources but keep their identities and original structure. Ministers alternate. New members choose one of the denominations.

4. The Larger Parish--A parish council made up from several churches. The ministers are frequently assigned as part of a staff. It may be denominational or interdenominational.

5. The Enlarged Church--Smaller churches related to a larger church, generally in town. Denominational.

6. The Union Church--Joint ownership of property, maintenance, etc. The congre-

gations remain denominational, usually with their own pastors.

7. The Consolidated Church--An organic union of two or more denominations becoming an affiliate of one denomination, with property consolidated.

There have been experiments also in such things as:

1. Affiliate Memberships--A member keeps membership in his original church during the time of temporary residence elsewhere.

2. Group Ministry--Several pastors share their talents; autonomy generally kept. This is done either denominationally or interdenominationally.

These experiments have met with various degrees of success, but in general none of them have been as successful as present needs and hopes would require. One reason is that they were not situation centered, based on concrete changing social structures, but were mostly attempts at emergency measures that were denominationally conscious more than anything else.

Some of these efforts that might seem to involve complexities for "traditional" Roman Catholic theological point of view may now be passed over as having been already honestly tried by our brothers but found to be, in general, wanting. Tailoring of others offers relatively little difficulty except for the effort necessary to inaugurate them and the necessary ultimate judicatory complexities.

Unfortunately, the apparently built-in impediments to success for those with denominational priority will be an unconscious automatic refuge for the more hesitant, traditional, or "normal" Roman Catholic or Protestant planner. The psychology of this reflex concern indicates another area for necessary creative study.

And others of these experiments that seem more simply implemented would be no great advance today for the same reasons that they are now considered imperfect by those who initiated them. And, while it is true that some are interdenominational efforts, the interdenominational character has arisen accidentally from an arrangement that was initiated because cooperative effort was less expensive and more convenient. It is time such efforts actually begin from an ecumenical basis, rather than from a necessity brought about from serious difficulties in finances, facilities or personnel.

A pilot project being established in the "new" community of Columbia, Maryland, is interesting, and perhaps the most significant step forward yet reported in America. It has received attention in national news journals. The experiment does seem truly situation-centered in the church's planning as well as in the planning of other elements in the community. Of course, this will be a rare possibility since most American communities already exist in some form, and the problem is to adapt to changing times rather than to build a completely new community on a vacant tract of land. However, as we watch this development we may see the activation of the principles about which we have been speaking. There seems to have been a sharing of precise, selective factual data, related to the actual or projected state of affairs. (This is obviously the need in confronting the problems of the church in non-metropolitan America!) And, a truly ecumenical concern seems present, even to the involvement of judicatories, in attempting to meet the needs of the situation. And, the entire project is certainly situation-centered.

Such experiments lead one to ask if difficulties are really so deep that they become practical impossibilities? Honest dialogue and scholarship, if ecumenically committed, will surely open new insights and create new possibilities.

If, as we increasingly attempt to avoid the appearance of unhealthy rivalry but advance no further in asking the basic questions about the existential state of the church in non-metropolitan America, do we not, in fact, become champions for indifference and a relativism which is not honestly reflective of anything so much as laziness in coming to grips with true problems? We can slip behind a mask so easily and unconsciously! Have we? Again?

Considering possible Catholic involvement in some of the earlier Protestant experiments, is it not safe to say that the first mistake would be for Catholics to repeat the experiments? Many of them would undoubtedly be successful to the same degree they have been for the Protestants. As a matter of fact it is to be regretted that some of these experiments were not tried in the Roman Church. However, this would be a denominational venture, which at this stage would be unbelievably blind. And since they have not been totally successful in Protestant efforts largely because of the denominational factors involved, let us not waste time, expense and suffering for tentative structures now recognized as incomplete. Very probably Roman Catholic involvement in the "Federated Church" plan with the pooling of resources but conservation of identity would seem to present no insuperable problems, and to a degree the organization of the "Larger Parish" and the "Union Church" could probably be adapted. Some, such as the "Yoked Parish" and the "Consolidated Church," would at this stage present difficulties. However, in all of these the inherent problem remains denominational. Also, of course, Roman Catholic involvement in similar efforts is not totally lacking. One example was recently noted in the news wherein Roman Catholics and Episcopalians of White Rock, New Mexico, are presently exploring the possibility of jointly constructing a building for the use of both congregations. It was reported that the pastor of the Catholic parish polled the Roman Catholic parishioners and found them overwhelmingly in favor of such a sharing of church facilities. The projected St. Mark's Church in Kansas City, Missouri, is another illustration.

Assuming true ecumenical commitment and rejection of denominationalism as an ideal or inevitability, there is no reason to believe that further models and experiments could not be developed, both for the immediate present and the future.

It is true that Bernard Quinn, a Roman Catholic, has ventured an opinion that:

> Catholics may feel that they are facing the Protestant problem in reverse. From the point of view of Protestant witness, the town and country is over-churched; from that of Catholic witness, under-churched. Yet, sharing as they do the same intense desire for the most effective Christian witness, Catholics--within the limits of authentic ecclesiology--will search for every point of contact with efforts that are likely to make this witness a success.[3]

I would say that if the judgment is made that we are under-churched, the basis for this judgment is the identical culprit running throughout these thoughts--denominationalism! But to sense even in the present fragmented state of the Christian church an underlying impetus of the unity of Christ, then the recognition of all elements demands an opposite judgment.[4]

To speak briefly as a "denominational," I must confess that as a Roman Catholic I too had some questions or concerns (perhaps from insufficient knowledge). The question of the ministry was one of the foremost.

It seemed to me that the obscure outlines beginning to emerge for the ministerial function in the Consultation study document (Ecumenical Designs) ran near robbing this service of its sacramentality as a specific and useful witness. If there should begin to emerge a type of group or team ministry wherein the minister/priest lost all specific ministerial identity in "the staff" which is both clerical and lay, what does he become? This only began to create concern when I read the parts of the Consultation study document that further urged his preparation for ministry in other "professional" disciplines so that there could be a facile switching back and forth of personnel depending on immediate need. I have no quarrel with that. But, it did appear that he could ultimately lose all specific identity particularly where ministerial and lay activities became relatively interchangeable. Perhaps this too would develop satisfactorily, but the traditional and new theological opinions on such are certainly far from synthesized at this point. Would it not be misdirected zeal if he became a "professional holy man," if his specific identity as a distinctive functioning member of the Body of Christ were lost? Perhaps my idea of the sacramental worth of the priest/minister as a catalyst or a point of unity is unconsciously too romantic?

In further reflection I do begin to realize that any member of the Christian community could function as the crystal that attracts the dispersed crystals in a given solution. But I am not satisfied with my thought on this point as yet.

However, I truly see no essentially prohibitive problem, even at this moment, in experimental attempts to solve the catechetical problem by "team" approach. Sunday

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[3] Bernard Quinn, The Protestant Approach to Town & Country (Washington:CARA, 1967), p. 24.

[4] This is not to deny the importance in God's salvific plan of some kind of localization of the full Catholic ministry and witness - in the sense indicated by the Decree on Ecumenism, n. 2.

School and C. C. D. classes are both experiencing difficulties. If a cooperative effort confronted the problem rurally, could we not evolve a tentative structure for the Christian formation of children? If texts, audio-visuals, etc., were prepared by a joint "curriculum committee" the basic realities of God, man, Christ, Redemption, etc., can surely be presented "safely" for all concerned. Facets that are clearly recognized as essentially denominationally distinct at the present could be handled denominationally, (e.g. training for Eucharist, Penance, Marriage, etc.). But the doctrine commonly professed (Incarnation, Baptism, etc.) could be done by some type of "team" approach that would have at its disposal a wealth of materials (audio-visuals, facilities, trained child-specialists, etc.) unavailable to individual congregations. At least it seems worthy of consideration as a beginning - for dialogue if nothing else.

If this elemental Christian education is in truth presented sympathetically to divergent points of view it does not seem impossible. Does this not assume the emergence of a totally new kind of Christian specialist or expert, a type evident in individuals now, but to be expected more generally in this present stage of ecumenical development? Within the church as a whole, may we not find an unexpected number of such experts with the necessary virtues of sympathy and objectivity approaching maturity, and are they not able to be supported immediately by existing publishing houses, training centers, etc.?

At any rate these are tentative half-way houses that may help us to mature ecumenically as the larger experiments mentioned earlier are developed through the more extensive research demanded.

And now, conscious of the evident risk of being justifiably accused of repetition, a restatement of some of the larger lines of thought still seems not superfluous. To do so by means of a brief collection of quotations may be best.

For the situation we have so lately recognized, Colin Williams says:

> The church has placed itself with man. Not at the point where he is learning to come to grips with the future, but where he is trying to give himself that nostalgic bridge which gives him roots of security in the past... But let me speak frankly--the greater sinners here are not just suburban churches, but rural churches. You know very well and there is no need for me to spell it out. The rural church itself is the plainest case of institutional disobedience in American life. Every other institution is in some way beginning to come to grips with the new urban technological culture which is penetrating the rural world, but the one place where rural man doesn't have to face the future is in the church! We have got as many little rural church places now as we had when the population was much bigger. In many places they have consolidated everything else, but not our church--there we can be nostalgic to the full. This disobedience is heretical because it

> refuses to see God as the living God of history, and we have got to be honest enough to confess our sins.[4]

And questions are being honestly posed. Martin E. Marty asks:

> Do the decline of agriculture, the end of isolation, the acceleration of mobility, the loss of neighborliness, the increase of leisure form permanent barriers to the fellowship or are they only threats to an institution in which I have placed much faith? Could it be that the death of some of these forms might provide new life for a Church in crisis? Was what I considered to be permanent and normative just an episode and an exception in human history?[5]

But honest examinations are being made. Bernard Quinn says:[6]

> Most denominations affiliated with the National Council of Churches . . . are much more aware of the urgency of inserting Christianity into all the meaningful community structures by means of the social gospel. They look at the situation in the town and country and conclude that the church is not adequately structured at present to meet the challenge of a secular world. Christians must pool their resources and actively seek close ecumenical cooperation according to the mind of Christ, cooperation which does not rule out the possibility of world, national, or local church mergers. Even before such organic unity comes about, churches should cooperate as closely as possible to the extent that renewal of spirit and the current status of theological dialogue will permit. "What will be satisfying is the honest portrayal to the world of reuniting Christian churches which do not compete but do accept and support each other and which - this is the most important of all - carry on together their mission of serving and saving through word and work in the world."[7]

And, on September 26, 1961, Paul D. McKelvey, Moderator of the United Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. sent the following policy letter to town and country church leaders:

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[4] Colin W. Williams, "Dialogue on Issues and Trends," The Church Meeting Human Needs, Report of the 1964 National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country, ed. Henry A. McCanna (New York: National Council of Churches, 1964), p. 107.

[5] Martin E. Marty, "The Church Faces Its Own Crisis in Its Own Life as Fellowship and Institution," The Church and Culture in Crisis in Town and Country, Report of the Town and Country Convocation of the United Church of Christ, 1963 (St. Louis: United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, 1963), p. 45.

[6] Quinn, op. cit., p. 13.

[7] Martin E. Marty, Church Unity and Church Mission (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), p. 27. [Used by permission.]

> The Church in town and country faces a crisis. Population is decreasing in areas that are already overchurched. Thousands of churches are without pastors. Many congregations struggle without proper leadership or adequate resources with resulting ineffectual programs. The resources God has given His Church are dissipated through denominational competition and overlapping. Many congregations, immersed in tradition, care for nothing but parochial interests.
>
> This is a crisis in town and country, not only of individual congregations. It is a crisis not only before one denomination. It is a crisis that confronts the whole Church.
>
> The issue is clear. The Church in town and country has no choice but to make radical changes and meet new needs, or die. Local congregations must be included in the total life and strategies of their denominations. They must be led to see that:
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> Some churches will have to be united with other denominations to assure a strong ministry to the people; some churches must be dissolved; many churches must be related to groups such as denominational or interdenominational larger parishes, or other types of cooperative programs; others are desperately needed as separate congregations and must be stimulated to sturdy responsibility.[8]

And perhaps the most truly honest, truly generous, truly Christian official statement was made in the General Synod of the United Church of Christ as part of its policy statement on December 12, 1963:

> In cooperation with the Conferences, we will encourage our local congregations and help them to enter into ecumenical conversations and negotiations looking toward solutions to the problems of fragmentation of Christian witness and competition of institutional church life in town and country communities as may be appropriate, such as Federation, denominational and inter-denominational group ministry, larger parish and yoked field, denominationally-related community church through merger, withdrawal of one or more denominations (including our own) from the field...[9]

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8. Quoted in The Church and Culture in Crisis in Town and Country (United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, 1963), p. 92.

9. "Local Ecumenicity in Town and Country: A Policy Statement of the United Church of Christ, 1963."

There is much to say, much to do. And this jumbled composition, the victim of an even greater affliction of contemporary society - that called "being too busy" - is a weak, pitiable creature. But it is still sincerely the offspring of vital forces equally alive in our society. So, as these and similar gangling, fledgling progeny multiply and gain vitality in our generation - the only one for which we are immediately responsible - perhaps it might not be exceptional to conclude with the words of Winston Churchill at the Lord Mayor's Day luncheon, November 10, 1942:

> Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is perhaps the end of the beginning.

Both the greatness of the struggle and the beauty of the ultimate vision are before us!

JOHN T. McGINN

Aspects of the Church and Its Mission in Areas Characterized by Christian Pluralism

Principles for Developing a Theological Perspective on Mission in Town & Country

The primary concern of Vatican II was the nature and mission of the Church and its need to be effectively involved in our pluralistic, ever-changing contemporary world. The Council tells us emphatically that the Church is a pilgrim marching through time and history. It adapts itself to the challenges of each age and grows in knowledge of herself and of her tasks in new situations; but it always maintains historical continuity with its Founder in this ever-maturing life and movement.

It seems difficult for many of our people to grasp this broad, open vision of the Church. They forget that the Church has had a 2000 year-old history and tradition. The Counter Reformation period, which many are reluctant to leave behind, forced the Church into an emergency situation and could never be the norm by which the Church measures its meaning and goals for all ages.

Pope Paul, in his opening remarks at the second session of the Council (September 29, 1963) declared: "The Church is a mystery; she is a reality imbued with the divine presence and for that reason, she is ever susceptible of new and deeper investigation."[1] And in his encyclical Ecclesiam Suam, the Pope reminded us that "the actual image of the Church is never as perfect, as lovely, as holy or as brilliant as that formative Divine Idea would wish it to be."[2]

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1. Floyd Anderson (ed.), Council Daybook, Vatican II, Sessions 1 and 2 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Catholic Conference, 1965), p. 146.

2. Ecclesiam Suam, Encyclical Letter of Pope Paul VI, August 6, 1964 (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor), p. 4.

Somewhat like an individual person, the Church progresses in the establishment of its own identity through external contacts. And we will deepen our appreciation of the Church and of her mission in our country, by reflecting particularly on our relationship with non-Christians, with our separated brethren and with the anonymous Christian.

A Catholic in America, reflecting on the nature and mission of the Church and considering the state of religion in our land must conclude that there is an urgent need for evangelization, mission or work for converts. Though we grant that ours is not technically a mission country, we are faced with a gigantic mission problem. And while we should not confuse this with ecumenism or forget God's love for every man, American Catholics do have a pressing missionary task here at home.

More than one-third of our neighbors are not affiliated with any Christian church. Many Americans, even when they call themselves Protestants or Catholics are in reality only nominal Christians. Some of our best educated and influential citizens, even though they are occasional church-goers, find in secular humanism the source of their highest aspirations and goals. And even within the Christian churches there is a most disturbing situation which the observing historian, Sidney E. Ahlstrom describes with painful accuracy:

> In most recent years, a kind of "Christianity of Main Street" has come into being and with it an implicit theology - a farrago of sentimentality, moralism, democracy, free enterprise, laicism, "confident living," and utilitarian concern for success."[3]

Certainly the Catholic Church is no stranger to the American scene and the Protestant tradition is a pervasive element. But even when we have put the most optimistic interpretation on the facts of our religious life, we must all be deeply disturbed. A realistic assessment of the actual facts makes us realize that millions of our neighbors stand in need of an introduction to authentic Christianity. Many of them worship infrequently, if at all; do not read the Bible; have little accurate knowledge of the teachings of Christ. As a consequence, these people have never made an all-out commitment to Christ or to any Christian Church.

Christianity, to be sure, does not die easily, within an individual or in a nation, and it can maintain a large residual influence in a people's outlook and daily life. But the imperatives of the Gospel and the personal demands of Christ are only faint echoes in the lives of the people I have described. Convinced or militant atheism has never been a potent force in our land. But the great mass of the un-churched or half-hearted Christians is a daily, inescapable reminder that the Christian Gospel has not yet been effectively presented to them. The decline of Christian faith so evident in Europe, from which

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3. Sidney E. Ahlstrom, "Theology in America: A Historical Survey," in James W. Smith and A. Leland Jamison (eds.), The Shaping of American Religion (Princeton University Press, 1961), p. 319.

our own religion originally derived by way of immigration, is increasingly evident on our side of the Atlantic. Perhaps this phenomenon has simply been delayed here and its full force is yet to be experienced in America.

Set up in the midst of these millions, although not by any means everywhere organized as well as it should be, is the Roman Catholic Church. It participates in the life of Christ in His Spirit, and shares in His divinely authenticated mission. In its deepest reality it is an internal communion, but it is also an external, visible institution with the means whereby this fellowship is begotten, fostered and preserved. Vatican II teaches us many distinctions here which we cannot neglect either in our reflections or in our labors. Yet the Council is clear that the Catholic Church is both the internal communion and visible institution willed by God. Only in that Church can the fullness of the means of salvation be attained. Hence its goal in pastoral and missionary activity is to diffuse the Church in its fullest intensity among all men.

The Catholic maintains that Christ founded only one Church and that the Roman Catholic Church is that Church. As a consequence we find in the Constitution on the Church the clear declaration: "Whosoever, therefore, knowing that the Catholic Church was made necessary by God through Jesus Christ, would refuse to enter her or to remain in her could not be saved."[4]

In parishes where the directives of Vatican II are pondered and digested, and where the spirit of renewal is abroad, healthy changes are being introduced. Noticeable in such parishes is a clear recognition that many of our next door neighbors need to be introduced to the full range of authentic Christianity. Here and there, we find Catholics and Protestants uniting in giving a common witness to the basic realities of Christ's revelation.

More frequently, however, there is evident an intelligent, charitable, prayerful - indeed in the best sense of the word, a more sophisticated - experiment in pre-catechesis. This proclaims the Christian Gospel in a call to repentance and to faith. Confining itself to the persons I have tried to describe, it is a direct invitation "to come and see" the contemporary, relevant necessity of Christ and of His Church. And for those who come to initial faith in Christ, a liturgical catechumenate instructs and forms them in the Christian mysteries and in the prayer-life of the Church. This is gradually supplementing our older inquiry classes, and is much more in accord with the renewed mission method of the Church. It is a perfectly legitimate and urgently needed aspect of every Catholic parish in view of the religious situation in America today.

This having been said, it needs to be brought to the attention of the faithful that when an individual, committed Protestant or other devout non-Catholic Christian seeks full Catholic communion he is not "converted." It is more accurate to describe him as becoming reconciled to the Church. The Decree on Ecumenism states: "However, it is evident that the work of preparing and reconciling those individuals who wish for full Catholic communion is of its nature distinct from ecumenical action. But there is no opposition between the two, since both proceed from the wondrous providence of God."[5] This statement is the result of long discussion at Vatican II. And it enables us to be more discerning, and to give greater precision to the type of witness we manifest in our relations with individuals in widely different situations.

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[4] Constitution on the Church, n. 14.

One of the greatest accomplishments of Vatican II was to make ecumenism a new dimension in the life of the Church. For any Catholic to neglect the Catholic principles of ecumenism, or to fail to apply them according to his opportunities and talents, amounts to a serious failure to think according to the mind of the Church.

Throughout four centuries Protestants and Catholics condemned each other, fought and argued with each other. Catholics often regarded Protestants as enemies and rivals, minimizing the power of God's Word among them and the vital influence of the Holy Spirit working in their sacramental and institutional life. Even in official documents, we seemed to regard Protestants, Anglicans and Orthodox as only slightly better off religiously than non-Christians. The very word "Catholic" came to have a restrictive meaning, in contradistinction to "Protestant."

Vatican II effected an enormous change in our relations with our separated brethren and it could do so because of a long, sound theological development. Previously, in thinking about the Church, we tended to stress a static, monolithic concept, concluding that some men definitely were members of the Church and that others were not in the Church.

It was the great insight of the Council called by Pope John, while in no way neglecting the fact that the Church is an institution, to emphasize the truth that the Church is primarily an internal communion. An interior union, by its very nature, admits of many levels and a variety of degrees. The Constitution on the Church, by teaching that the interior gift of the Holy Spirit is the decisive point, enables us to make allowance for various ways of being related to the Church. Consequently, we are on firm ground when we take a positive, optimistic view of the authentic Christian elements cherished in Protestantism.

As Christ is the Sacrament of God, so the Church is the Sacrament of Christ. In its visible, institutional aspects, the Church can be compared to the sacraments. As a sacrament is a sign or symbol of the grace it effects, so the Church does not so much contain the whole range of salvation but points to it, and ceaselessly strives by prayer and work to make God's reign among his children a reality. The salvific influence of the Church reaches far beyond its visible presence.

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[5] Decree on Ecumenism, n. 4.

At the same time, the Church is somehow present wherever Christ's Spirit is working. And since the saving reality which the Church strives to effect is of greater significance than the visible sign of its presence, there can be a real fellowship among persons who may not be fully united in the visible, institutional areas of their religious life. The teaching of Vatican II makes it clear that the Church of Christ subsists in its institutional completeness only in the Roman Catholic Church. But this teaching is equally insistent that other Christian bodies, although defective as institutions, are partial realizations of the Church of Christ.

The Council also points out that the manifold objective gifts of Christ, of themselves, do not guarantee the attainment of holiness. Cooperation with grace is always a necessary condition on the part of the individual. And since our response to grace is never perfect, the Catholic Church, like any other religious body, will always be in need of purification, penance and renewal. The pilgrim Church, marching through time and history towards the Kingdom to be completed at the end of time, must struggle against a host of internal weaknesses and exterior trials. Its confidence is based on the continued presence of Christ's Spirit, who grants new graces and inspirations suited to each new stage on its journey.

This God-given deeper insight into the nature of the Church has opened up many new relationships between Catholic and other Christian bodies. The first of these is dialogue or friendly conversation. This is taking place at the highest level of theology where Protestant and Catholic mutually explore the profound problems of Christian scholarship and also at the level of the local congregations in the enormously successful "living-room dialogues."

The postconciliar Church does not choose to claim, without qualification, to be identical with the Church of Christ. And for the first time it refers to the Christian bodies with which we rub elbows daily as "churches and ecclesial bodies of the West." They, too, are wayfaring communities of Christians, who await the coming of our common Lord. They retain, in varying degrees, a wide range of the Christian inheritance. And while these non-Catholic bodies are institutionally imperfect, their members may achieve a degree of evangelical holiness superior to that of others who are in fuller possession of Christian institutional elements.

In our various encounters with them, we meet with charity, mutual respect and a desire to learn from each other. Whether it be in the higher realms of Scripture or theology, or in the application of the Gospel to the problems of everyday living, we both teach and learn, speak and listen. Since the Church is always in need of renewal and reform, it is good for us to "see ourselves as others see us." And our separated brethren can offer us helpful criticism and advice; can share with us insights into the relevance of the Gospel; and assist us in adapting those elements of the Church's practices that are susceptible to modification and improvement.

In addition to friendly dialogue, these theological principles enable us to pray with our separated brethren and not merely for them. Once communicatio in sacris was severely frowned upon. Now, within necessary limits imposed by the sad fact of our lack of unity, some common prayer and worship is encouraged. The Decree on Ecumenism wisely leaves the implementation of this to "prudent decision of the local episcopal authority, unless the Bishops' Conference according to its own statutes, or the Holy See, has determined otherwise."[6] With regard to common reception of the Eucharist, our theologians are grappling with the special difficulties involved. Yet all Christians agree that common prayer should be a sincere sign, one which expresses the measure of unity which does exist while not implying a closer union than has been actually arrived at.

Although we are unfortunately separated, we are indeed brothers to those committed Protestants who are loyally dedicated to their churches. And we pray, work and endeavor to understand each other in preparation for the day when, in God's own time and way, we may fulfill Christ's wish that we all be one.

Meanwhile, in line with the Decree on Ecumenism, we seek to multiply ways of confessing together our common faith in the Trinity and in the Incarnate Son, our common Lord and Savior. We give evidence together of the hope that sustains us, and join with Protestants in our communities in the solution of civic and social problems. We need to repair the damage which our divisions have caused and we do this by expressing the degree of unity we possess in cooperative action. The general principle should be to do together everything we can do, consistent with our confessional integrity.

What a transformation would occur if Protestants and Catholics pooled their energies and resources in seeking peace, social and racial justice. What a change might come over our local community if we set ourselves to the task of improving conditions arising from poverty, bad housing, illness, illiteracy and unfair employment practices. Why has it taken us so long to undertake together the problem of religious education within our public educational system?

There is a third area with which any contemporary study of the Church must be increasingly concerned. It is simply a fact that large numbers of men today look upon the world in a way that is radically different from the view of their Christian forebears. Even their experience of God is significantly different. This post-Christianity is to be found in every age bracket - but especially the young - and in every strata of society. Scientific discoveries, modern inventions, mass communication, the advance of secular education - these and other factors have changed men in our world and their fundamental outlook. These men are no longer moved by traditional proofs for God's existence. In fact, they have a deep sense of God's absence. And they find little to attract them in our ecclesiastical structures, our Bible, sacraments or theology.

The Council did not speak as clearly as we might wish about the presence of the Church among the two-thirds of mankind that is definitely non-Christian. But it did offer valuable hints and guidelines which have greatly stimulated speculation among

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3. Decree on Ecumenism, n. 8.

contemporary theologians. As a result, Christian scholars are increasingly concerned with the "anonymous Christian" and with "secular Christianity."

Since God wills the salvation of all men and since some relation to the Church is necessary for salvation, can anything of the Church be present where the Gospel is not accepted and Christ is not acknowledged as Lord and Savior? In many beautiful paragraphs of the conciliar documents we are reminded that in God's plan, Christ is the center of the universe, the origin and end of all things, and the one who gives intelligibility and fulfillment to all creation. And in the Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, the Fathers proclaimed that the Paschal Mystery touches in a mysterious way every son of Adam. If a man, therefore, acts according to his conscience and by the best light he possesses, he may live unconsciously by grace. This can be true of many who, through no fault of their own, do not believe in God. They can be anonymous Christians.

Though the question bristles with problems, there would seem to be two ways in which the Church is present and active. There is the institutional presence of the Church, in continuity with the ministry of Christ, implying an explicit profession of Christian faith and the sacramental forms of worship. Besides this, however, there would seem to be an actual though secret, hidden, mysterious presence of the Church among those who have not effectively confronted the belief and worship that stems historically from Christ.

Whenever an individual - however ignorant of Christ and His Church - goes out of himself to honor an ideal, to fulfill a duty, to be generous and concerned with the need of others, he is graced by the hidden action of Christ's Spirit. And all men, being social by nature, search for fellowship and fulfillment in association with others. Frequently, these organizations, although not professedly religious, labor heroically for justice, peace and brotherhood. The Incarnation and Paschal Mystery are somehow related to all this and give rise to the term "anonymous Christianity." Christ is not far from any man or group, especially when they respond to a good impulse. And as Schillebeeckx puts it "the acts of Christ in glory are acts of the whole Christ, the integral Christ in and with His Body the Church."[7]

None of this, however, excuses us from a deep concern to plant the Church in every land, to extend its sanctifying influence and to proclaim ceaselessly the good news of Christ. To the extent that we render the institutional Church really accessible to men, we assist them to know the goodness of creation, the innate dignity of man and the true use and final destiny of created things. The Church exercises her healing office constantly, telling man of sin and of its cure. And in endless ways she exercises her elevating influence, drawing men to a more conscious and a deeper union with God. The Church is "by her relationship with Christ...a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind."[8] The unity of the Church, embracing in a community of love men of every nation, should and does inspire men with greater hope and deeper charity. With hope in the conviction that human existence does make sense. With charity in the knowledge that the love of Christ is the cure for the ills that divide men, perpetuate dissentions and plunge the world into enmity and strife.

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[7] Edward Schillebeeckx, "The Church and Mankind," in The Church and Mankind, Concilium, vol. 1 (Glen Rock, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1965), p. 87.

[8] Constitution on the Church, n. 1.

It is quite likely that we shall not catch the attention of the anonymous Christian unless the Church manifests ever more intensely the features of Christ the Servant. In order to win interest for the City of God, we need to assist all those who are trying to build a worthy city of man. Of course, we wish to help these modern non-Christians to relate themselves consciously to God and to accept the graces He grants so abundantly through His Church. Perhaps it was never so important to remember that when we "give aid to orphans and widows," when we "love our neighbor as ourselves" we obey the Christian Gospel but we also meet modern man where He is closest to God. Joining hands with him here, in binding up the wounds of humanity and in the common pursuit of a better world, we are drawing him ever closer to Christ's Bride.

And in the process, the Catholic has much to learn. John XXIII and Paul VI have both stressed the necessity of dialogue with the world. And dialogue is a two-way street. The Church in the postconciliar era teaches, but it also learns; it speaks but it also listens. And this combination of service and dialogue may well be the first stage of a new relationship both with other Christians and with non-Christians that can help revitalize the Church and the religious life of the men of our time.

By reflective prayer and by living the Church's life, along with participation in its tasks, we attain ever richer glimpses of its unfathomable riches. This should beget serenity, confidence and trust. Complexities become motives for reverence, love and even satisfaction where there is living faith. We believe in an institutional Church which is also a mystical Church, a pilgrim Church which looks confidently to future triumph, a human Church which is the very Body of Christ and temple of His own Spirit. And it is our privilege to give witness to all this, as we meet men in their varied circumstances, trusting that they will come closer to the fullness of communion with Christ which the Church offers them.

JOHN B. SHEERIN

The Stance of Conservative Evangelicals: An Ecumenical Problem for Town & Country

A Background Paper on the Role of Conservative Evangelicals in American Protestantism

What is evangelical Protestantism? All Protestants take it for granted that they are evangelical but there is one group of Protestants who are generally called conservative evangelicals. They do not constitute a church or organized religious community but are a movement or trend that runs through all the Protestant denominations. To define a conservative evangelical is almost as difficult as defining a conservative Catholic.. Perhaps we might say that a conservative Catholic's reflexes are slower than those of a progressive Catholic, but it is not reflexes or even theology that distinguish a conservative evangelical from other Protestants.

Eugene Smith, executive secretary of the World Council of Churches in the U. S. and quite sympathetic to the conservative evangelicals, describes them in organizational rather than theological terms: those Protestant Christians who refuse membership in councils related to the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. This description is helpful but negative and I would prefer to describe them positively as Bible Christians supremely dedicated to the preservation of the Gospel in its purity and to the preaching of the Gospel with a sense of urgency. Dr. W. A. Visser't Hooft some time ago said that one of the main divisions in Christendom today is not between the Churches but between those people in all the churches who take their stand definitely upon the Bible and those whose thought is dominated by other considerations.

The conservative evangelicals then are Christians in all churches who take their stand definitely upon the Bible. They are said to represent 30 percent of the total membership of Protestant churches, but they also include Christians in groups such as the Pentecostals and Quakers. The great revival movement that swept like wildfire through American Protestantism in the 19th century has left traces of influence on present-day conservative evangelism. The revivalist was rather indifferent to denominational lines as long as the listener was Protestant. The revivalist preacher urged his audience to experience conversion, to have peace with God through Jesus, and thereby lose all sense of sin and guilt. The great revivalist Charles Finney described his own experience of conversion: "As I turned and was about to take a seat by the fire, I received a mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost. Without any expectation of it, without ever having the thought in my mind that I had ever heard the thing mentioned by any person in the world, the Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression like a wave of electricity going through and through me. Indeed it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love..."[1] Revivalism exerted a strong influence on American culture and even on American politics but the revival preachers tended to identify "Romanism" as the enemy of Protestantism, peace and progress.

In the early part of this century, the coming of modernism brought a split in Protestant ranks. Protestant fundamentalists made a massive protest against the modernist attempt to take over control of Protestant churches and we might say that the conservative evangelicals had their origin in this protest. However, they did not then nor do they now constitute an independent church. Moreover, it is only the extreme right wing of the movement that cares to be described as fundamentalist. An amusing episode happened at the World Congress of Evangelicals in Berlin last October. A fundamentalist leader, Carl McIntire, president of the International Council of Christian Churches, failed to reply to invitations to the Congress, but after all the delegates' seats had been filled, he descended upon the Congress and demanded admission as a delegate. He was offered a seat as visitor but refused. He was then offered a seat as observer but declined on the ground that this would put him in the same category with Catholics and Jews. So he did not get into the Congress.

The conservative evangelicals are not a dying cause. They are very much alive. While Protestant churches affiliated with the National Council of Churches increased the total number of their foreign missionaries by about 5 percent between 1952 and 1960, the conservative evangelicals increased their foreign missionaries by about 150 percent. In 1960, National Council of Churches' member-churches had 10,324 foreign missionaries, while the conservative evangelical churches had 16,066 in 1960. Although they are growing in strength, there is no reason to think that all conservative evangelicals will merge into one church.

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[1] H. Shelton Smith, Robert Handy and L. A. Loetscher (eds.), American Christianity, vol. 2 (New York: Scribner, 1960), p. 22.

What doctrines do the conservative evangelicals emphasize? First, they hold adamantly to the importance of preserving the Gospel in all its purity. They are therefore highly suspicious of any notion of development of doctrine and are generally hostile to form criticism. We can of course sympathize with this yearning for purity of doctrine. I have not yet seen any reported conservative evangelical reaction to the Anglical proposal to eliminate the concept of "heresy" from their canon law, but I think the conservative evangelical position would be that anyone differing from the teachings of essential Christianity should sever himself from membership in a Christian Church.

Secondly, they are deeply committed to evangelism. They have a sense of imminent urgency about preaching the Gospel not only because it is helpful but even indispensable to salvation. They contend that there is "no salvation apart from Jesus" and this conviction spurs them to massive missionary efforts to save "a lost world." Today we Catholics have Council documents admitting the possibility of salvation apart from formal belief in Jesus as Savior but did not St. Francis Xavier and other great Catholic missionaries hold that one could not be saved apart from formal belief in Christianity? The conservative evangelicals sternly reprobate any theology of universalism on the ground that it undercuts the preaching of the Gospel.

Thirdly, they believe in Christian Unity but in a somewhat remote fashion. They emphasize the primacy of truth over unity. They generally cast a cold eye on the ecumenical work of the National Council of Churches and the World Council as well. They seem to feel that most ecumenical theologians are only too ready to jettison the pure Gospel in order to bring about unity. Moreover, when they speak about unity, it is usually a spiritual rather than organizational unity that they have in mind. Their complaint against the World Council is that it is trying to impose on Christians an artificial, man-made unity whereas they would prefer to wait for spiritual unity in God's good time.

Fourthly, they tend to consign social action to a subordinate role in the Christian life - a role immensely inferior to that of preaching the Gospel. The revivalist movement stressed works of benevolence, such as helping those in prison, temperance work and campaigns for peace, but the conservative evangelical opposition to social action which is so pronounced a feature of their program today, probably derives from the conservative evangelical protest against the modernists' dream of building the Kingdom on earth through social reforms. Some of the evangelicals affirm that the individual Christian should play a large role in society but that social action is not the proper province of the Church.

Fifthly, the conservative evangelicals insist on the new birth as essential to the Christian life. To them the experience of being born again is more important than any church ceremonial. You will hear them say, for instance, that one is baptized by water only as a symbol or external sign of the fact that he has already been regenerated by the Spirit. The ceremony of baptism then is a sequel to conversion and they hold that one is baptized because he has been regenerated, not regenerated because he has been baptized. Many of these evangelicals are men and women who were restless in churches that put no great emphasis on rebirth and they have joined conservative evangelical churches precisely for that reason. They believe that Christian Unity must be a unity in the Spirit binding together those who have experienced personal conversion, and that any other unity is spurious and purely mechanical.

To illustrate these characteristics of conservative evangelical faith and practice, I would like to report on the World Congress on Evangelism held at Berlin, Germany from October 25th to November 4th, 1966.[2] It was the greatest gathering of conservative evangelicals ever held. Sponsored by Christianity Today, a conservative Protestant magazine, it was attended by some 1200 delegates and observers from 104 countries. The theme was "One Race, One Gospel, One Task." Editor Carl Henry of Christianity Today acted as presiding chairman with Billy Graham as honorary chairman. The aim of the Congress was to define and clarify the meaning of biblical evangelism for our day, to establish its relevance and to underline its urgency as well as to challenge the Christian Churches to renewal through proclamation of the traditional faith.

Rev. William Manseau of All Saints Catholic Church in Roxbury, Massachusetts, was invited as an observer. Father Manseau operates a store-front church in Roxbury, holds Bible services there and is associated with The Catholic Messengers of the Bible who promote Bible reading and "close discipleship with Jesus Christ." There were three Catholic observers from Germany - all invited personally. Observers at World Council meetings are invited by their own churches; thus, Catholic observers are invited by the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. Observers at the II Vatican Council were invited by their own churches, or perhaps I should say they were invited by the Vatican but named by their own churches. The invitations to the Berlin Congress however were sent directly to us by the officers of the Congress; I was invited as a journalist.

The speakers constantly reiterated the theme that there is "no salvation apart from Jesus." The urgency of saving souls was impressed upon the delegates by an ingenious device. In the lobby of the Congress Hall was a great map of the world and under it a population clock ticking off the increase per second in world population. On the map in four languages were the words, "Every second another soul to save." The constant ticking of the clock reverberated throughout the lobby and gave the delegates almost a physical sense of the urgency of their task to save souls. At the end of the Congress, the procession made its way to the clock to total up the number of souls born into the world since the opening day of the Congress. This sense of urgency was heightened by constant references to the Second Coming of Christ. One got the impression that millions of souls are on the brink of hell, "brands to be snatched from the burning."

If there are millions of souls to be saved and preaching can save them, why should the Church get involved in projects to improve the structures of society? Certain speakers did exhort participation in social action but usually they had in mind person-to-person acts of charity rather than Church involvement in legislative projects to prevent evils, and always social action was subordinated to preaching the Gospel. Billy Graham for instance contended that if the preacher speaks the word in power he will convert men who will in turn influence society, but he made it clear that the first commandment for evangelists is to preach. John Stott, honorary chaplain to the Queen of England, said that Christ healed the sick and raised the dead but that this type of ministry was subordinate to his main role of preaching the Gospel. Billy Graham's reluctance to advocate deep Christian involvement in the reform of social structures has subjected him to biting criticism from liberal Protestants.

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[2] Cf. Carl F. Henry (ed.), One Race, One Gospel, One Task: Report on the World Congress on Evangelism, Berlin, 1966, 2 vols. (Minneapolis: World Wide Publishing Co., 1967).

No clear concept of the nature of the Church emerged from the Congress. This of course was understandable since the spectrum of theological views ranged all the way from Anglicanism to Pentecostalism. Most of the talks in the discussion groups however gave the impression that these evangelicals lean toward a concept of an invisible church held together by spiritual bonds, not by organized structures. Certain speakers condemned formalism, sacramentalism and sacerdotalism but without any specific anti-Catholic bias. I did hear however a few disturbing remarks about the effects of baptism. Except for the Anglicans in my discussion group, none of the delegates seemed to favor the ceremony of baptism except one who considered it a symbolic act whereby parents indicate their willingness to raise the child as a Christian. Some said that baptism as a rite is an obstacle to evangelism in that it creates the illusion that one is saved and this may prevent a person from listening to the saving message of the evangelist.

Little was said about the sacrament of confession. John Stott, however, questioned the Catholic interpretation of John 20:23: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven..." saying that the verse could mean only a commandment to preach the conditions necessary for forgiveness, and could not be read as a mandate to forgive sins.

As for the Eucharist, the main speakers and members of discussion groups did not touch upon it, as far as I know. Possibly it might have been dealt with in the discussion group on "sacerdotalism" but my guess is that most of the delegates would associate the Eucharist with transubstantiation and dismiss it as a mediaeval superstition.

What was the general attitude toward Catholicism? First, I must say that the Catholics present were treated with utmost friendliness and cordiality. In an interview with the Catholics, Billy Graham spoke enthusiastically about his warm friendship with Archbishop Cardinale, the Apostolic Delegate in England. He said the Delegate had attended several of his Crusade meetings in London recently. He informed us that his practice at revivals was to recommend to the local committee that Catholics who make "a decision for Christ" and hand in decision cards be referred to Catholic priests for counselling. In some cases, the local committee has refused to do so but Billy Graham said that he never permits Catholics to be referred to Protestant ministers, and this has brought down on him the wrath of the fundamentalists. He asked where he could obtain a copy of the Liturgical Constitution, and so I sent him a copy of all the Council documents.

In this interview, Billy Graham said he felt he had more in common with Catholics than with liberal Protestants. To my question whether he considered the Congress to have been adequately ecumenical, he responded that he himself was interested in Christian unity but considered his role to be that of a leader, not a crusader (even though he conducts Crusades) and that a leader must not get out too far in advance of his people.

The conservative evangelicals as already mentioned, are quite hostile generally toward the World Council of Churches. In one of his talks, Billy Graham said that the World Council had been born in an outburst of evangelical zeal at Edinburgh in 1910 but had lost that zeal. The impression at the Congress seemed to be that liberal theologians in the W. C. C. had adulterated the Gospel in order to make compromises for the sake of unity. Some seemed to think that most W. C. C. theologians were as far out as Bultmann, Bishop Pike and Bishop Robinson. Some Roman Catholics have said that Catholic membership in the W. C. C. would strengthen the conservative forces in the W. C. C. but my impression is that Catholic membership in the world body would drive the conservative evangelicals farther away than ever from the contacts with Catholics that are just now beginning to develop.

The conservative evangelicals maintain a somewhat hostile attitude toward the National Council of Churches as toward the W. C. C. In general they regard it as the Establishment and they picture it as riddled with liberalism especially in its new-style evangelism. The N. C. C. evangelists claim the Church's mission today is to right the wrongs of society rather than to conduct revivals. A surprising development last December was that the N. C. C. invited Billy Graham to give an address to the General Assembly of the N. C. C. at Miami Beach. The over-all effect, I believe, was favorable and will improve relations between the evangelicals and the N. C. C. Graham apparently felt he was bidding for the uncommitted in the audience and so he gave a rousing "revival" talk bewailing sin, guilt, death and ending up with a fiery conclusion. One high official of the N. C. C. told me that he felt quite sure that the confrontation between Billy and the N. C. C. would help to break down the walls dividing these evangelicals from the National Council. However, there is a strong pocket of resistance among the former, especially among those who call the N. C. C. "the Manhattan Curia" and regard it as "a Yankee, liberal, Northern, civil-rights outfit."

The Berlin Congress was a great personal triumph for Billy Graham. The delegates came from all parts of the world and from clashing factions: there were Anglicans, Missouri Synod Lutherans, Southern Baptists, bitter foes of the World Council and even two former presidents of the World Council. There were even some Quakers on hand. This was certainly an exuberant diversity of Christians and the Congress could have degenerated into a Tower of Babel. But the figure of Billy Graham dominated the Congress and his unifying influence welded the conflicting groups into a warm fellowship before the Congress ended.

The Congress may prove to be a great turning point in Protestant history. Previously the conservative evangelicals were a scattered, disorganized movement suffering what they considered unfair treatment at the hands of liberal Protestants. They had been on the defensive and felt umbrage at the liberals for relegating them to a second-class status in Protestantism. At the Congress, however, all that was changed. They gained confidence through seeing so many kindred believers, through hearing so many rousing talks, through realizing that they possess a leader of stature in Billy Graham. At the Congress, they were beginning to come out of their isolation and now are flexing their muscles, spoiling for a battle with the liberals. They will undoubtedly attempt to gain more power and prestige in their own respective churches and will put liberal Protestants on the defensive in many sections of the United States.

In the past, Catholics have isolated themselves from dialogue with these evangelicals and they have had no great desire to enter into dialogue with us. Many of us simply took it for granted that they were vehemently anti-Catholic. Now, the advent of Pope John and the presidency of John F. Kennedy have altered the Catholic image among conservative evangelicals today. From now on, they will be more open to dialogue with us, and of course we realize that they represent a strong tradition of solid Christianity. I developed a warm friendship with one delegate, Rufus Jones, and found to my satisfaction that he is president of one of the largest evangelical associations, the National Association of Evangelicals. It would be a grave mistake to ignore these Bible-loving Protestants.

There has been almost a vacuum in our relations with them but I believe the time has come for us to fill up that vacuum with friendly conversations and if it can be arranged, with formal dialogue.

WILLIAM V. D'ANTONIO,
JAMES D. DAVIDSON,
JOSEPH A. SCHLANGEN

The Relevance of Sociological Research for the Study of the Church in Community Life

In this paper we are concerned with the implications that sociological studies may have for the operation of the Church in community life. We will base our remarks on some data we recently gathered in a study of Protestants and Catholics in two Oklahoma communities.

We must recognize immediately that in discussing the issues of this session, we are dealing with at least two groups of people: 1) religionists and 2) sociologists. These two groups are likely to approach the problems of this session in very different ways.

In the "religionist" category we can include clergymen and active laymen. These people have made personal commitments to the Church and are primarily concerned with the continued effectiveness of the Church in modern society. From this point of view, when religionists perceive a situation in the Church, they are likely to define it as being either "good" or "bad." Usually a situation is considered "good" if it is consistent with the values, beliefs or goals of the Church. On the other hand, if a situation threatens the Church's goals or beliefs, it is usually considered "bad." If the situation is defined as bad, the religionist is likely to ask: "What can we do to correct this situation?" or "how can we eliminate this problem?" In short, the religionist is action-oriented in the sense that, depending on how he defines a given situation in terms of his Church's goals, he usually wants to do something to either reorient a bad condition or perpetuate a good one.

On the other hand, when the sociologist goes about his work, he makes no commitment to a particular Church or other group beyond his science.[1] The continued operation of the Church is not his principal concern. He is a social scientist -- a man whose primary concern is understanding and predicting patterns of human behavior. His commitment is to man's effort to understand how and why people behave as they do under different social circumstances. He may be studying political (voting) behavior; he may consider family (divorce) behavior patterns; he may be concerned with the educational processes of upper and lower class people. In short, he is interested in many different types of human behavior, only one of which may be religious behavior. While he may have some personal interest in seeing that certain conditions persist or change, as a sociologist, it is not his task to change the conditions he is studying. In his professional role, he is not action-oriented, as the religionist is.

Let us give an example of how the religionist and the sociologist might approach the same problem from their two different perspectives. Consider a pastor of a rural church who thinks his parishioners are not concerned with the important social issues of our times. If we assume that the development of concern for these issues is a goal of his church, the pastor is likely to ask: "What can we do to show these people that they must be concerned about these issues if they are going to be good Christians?" He may then establish a parish program to encourage his people to become more involved in community projects, or he may arrange discussion groups through which his people may become informed about community problems.

The sociologist, on the other hand, would ask a very different set of questions. Instead of asking "what can we do..?" he might first ask "are these people concerned about these social issues or not?" In other words, he might first test the possibility that the clergyman's perception of the situation might be inaccurate to begin with. The sociologist wants to confirm a situation before he proceeds further in his analysis. If the people are concerned about these issues, to what extent are they concerned? What aspects of these issues are of most concern to them? And why are they concerned? If they are not concerned, why aren't they? Is it because they have no real knowledge of the issues, or is it that they are well-informed people who stand to lose money if they become involved? How do education, occupation and religious commitment affect their degree of concern? The sociologist may also ask, if this situation continues, what are its implications for the Church and for society in general? Finally, the sociologist may be testing some hypothesis or trying to build on some general theory which has little or nothing to do with religion per se.

In short, when the religionist asks "what can we do...?" the sociologist cannot answer him directly. Any answer to this question would presuppose a value commitment that the sociologist cannot adopt in his research. The sociological findings may well be value-loaded; the research procedures must be value-free. In other cases, however, the religionist's interests may coincide with the sociologist's interests. For example, if a group of religionists do not know enough about a certain situation to judge whether it is good or bad, they may ask the sociologist to help them determine the nature of the situation. For instance, "what is the condition of the rural Church in contemporary American society?" Or "what will happen if this condition continues?" With questions like these, the sociologist can gather data that directly bear on a given condition and suggest what these behaviors might mean for the Church and society. The religionist can put these data in the context of his value system and decide whether or not this situation is good or bad. Once he has made this judgment, he can take the steps he decides are most appropriate for the continued and effective operation of his Church.

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[1] The following books provide a more detailed introduction to the sociology of religion: Thomas O'Dea, The Sociology of Religion (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966); David O. Moberg, The Church as a Social Institution (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964); Louis Schneider (ed.), Religion, Culture, and Society (New York: Wiley, 1964).

The dual objective of our presentation is 1) to discuss briefly some aspects of our Oklahoma research, and 2) to suggest how such data can be relevant to the issues of this session.

THE OKLAHOMA STUDY

Early in the Spring of 1965 Father John Sullivan of the Extension Society of the Catholic Church asked us to conduct a study of religion in the towns of Edmond and Poteau, Oklahoma.[2] Extension hoped that our study would assist them in learning more about the actual state of religion (Catholic and Protestant) in these towns and in deciding what, if any, changes should be made in their program of helping pastors in different rural localities run their churches. We informed Father Sullivan that we would not be able to suggest definitive program changes as a result of our study, but we assured him that such a study would give Extension a more accurate picture of the religious conditions in the two towns. For example, it seemed possible that differences between what the clergy think people believe and what the people themselves say they believe might be revealed in such a study. We suggested that with this information Extension would be better able to make the decisions it felt were most appropriate in terms of its own goals.

Our study was quite broad in scope. We collected data on a number of aspects of religion. We attempted (1) to determine what similarities or differences could be found in the belief patterns of the members of eight denominations in these towns; (2) to see if there were any differences in the attitudes these groups had about a series of social issues; (3) to discover what images the members of each group had of the other denominations and the extent to which the members of these groups interacted socially; (4) to examine the laity's perceptions of the structure of their own and each others' churches; and (5) to test the possibility that different personality characteristics might be associated with membership in different religious groups; and (6) to determine the extent to which urban and rural living conditions might influence the religious beliefs and practices of our respondents. The eight denominations participating in the study were the Assembly of God in Poteau, the Missouri Lutheran Church in Edmond, and the Southern Baptist, Catholic, Christian, Episcopal, Methodist and Presbyterian churches in both communities.

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[2] These two communities were chosen from a list of several possible locales. Extension had been active in both towns for several years. The researchers were concerned with the selection of towns to the extent that they wanted one urban or suburban community and one rural community in which there were churches that could be compared by denomination.

Because we were from Notre Dame and doing a religious study for the Extension Society of the Catholic Church, we did not know how we would be received in the predominantly "Bible Belt" area of Oklahoma. We had to take many precautionary steps to check against any possible misinterpretation of the objectives of our research. For example, we rejected an offer to stay at the Catholic rectories in each town to avoid being identified as having ulterior "Catholic motives." We also guaranteed each Protestant and Catholic clergyman that we would give him a complete copy of our final report for his own use. As it turned out, the clergymen and members of each parish were most cooperative. Only one clergyman out of the 14 we contacted refused our request for cooperation; all others agreed to, and did in fact, help us in any way they could.

To accomplish what we set out to do, two investigators were sent to live in the two towns for the summer and conduct the study. During the early phases of their stay in the towns, the investigators conducted personal interviews with the clergymen of each church, gathered general information about the socio-economic characteristics of the towns, attended worship services of all the churches, and established rapport with the people whom they were studying. The response was most encouraging, and the residents of the towns generally came to recognize and trust the investigators in their research.

The investigators obtained the membership rolls of each church from the clergyman. From these rolls we obtained representative samples of members, and during the last three weeks of the study, we administered questionnaires to the people who were included in our samples. In many cases the questionnaires were distributed at the churches and the investigators were granted time to inform the parishioners of the nature of the study. Those people who were not in church received their questionnaires through the mail. By the end of the summer the investigators had collected over 300 questionnaires.

During the winter of 1965 and 1966 the data was processed on the computer and preliminary analyses were begun. The summer of 1966 was devoted to writing the final report of the data we had gathered. The result of this work was a 240 page report which was sent to each clergyman in Oklahoma and five copies were sent to the Extension

Society in Chicago.[3]

FINDINGS

It is impossible for us to discuss all of our findings in this paper. When we accepted the invitation to participate in this Consultation, we faced the problem of selecting those data that would be most relevant to the theme of this session. We wrote to CARA and asked for a specification of the types of problems that might be most relevant to this audience. Our choice of topics reflects this correspondence.

Our major focus concerns the fact that religion is related to both the supernatural and to society at the same time. Just as it provides man with a transcendental relationship, religion also supplies man with social relationships through the church.[4] If we can speak of the divinity of Christ and the love of God, we can also speak of Christ's social teachings and God's Ten Commandments regarding man's social behavior. If we can speak of the Church as a religious institution concerned with protecting and developing the message of personal salvation, we can also speak of it as a social institution through which Christ's message is carried out in the world. In general, we can distinguish between several dimensions of religious belief: 1) the transcendental or "vertical" dimension which provides a definition of the supernatural and emphasizes man's personal relationships to the supernatural; 2) the social-gospel or "horizontal" dimension which, although ultimately concerned with the supernatural, is concerned with the conduct of man's social relations. In short, while religion is private and transcendental, it is also very public and social.

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[3] See William V. D'Antonio, James D. Davidson, and Joseph A. Schlangen, Protestants and Catholics in Two Oklahoma Communities, unpublished report, Department of Sociology, University of Notre Dame, 1966. This report contains a complete summary of the objective, methodology, and findings of the study. In addition to this report the following articles have been based on the data from the Oklahoma study: Davidson, Schlangen, and D'Antonio, "Some Implications of Interfaith Perceptions, Patterns of Belief, and Perceptions of Church Structure," Sociological Analysis, 28:3 (Fall, 1967), 123-141; Davidson and Schlangen, "The Status of Catholics in Two Oklahoma Communities," in William T. Liu (ed.), Catholics U. S. A. (New York: Wiley, 1967); Davidson, Schlangen, and D'Antonio, "On the Sociology of Ecumenism," paper presented at the American Catholic Sociological Society meeting in San Francisco, August, 1967, and submitted for publication to the Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion; Davidson, Schlangen, and D'Antonio, "Protestant and Catholic Perceptions of Church Structure," submitted for publication to the Review of Religious Research; and Schlangen, "Religious Involvement and Dogmatism," unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Sociology, University of Notre Dame, 1966.

[4] See O'Dea, op. cit. for a discussion of the functions that religion performs for society and the individual, pp. 13-18.

A major facet of our research concerned the effort to relate these two patterns. For example, what do Catholics and Protestants believe regarding the transcendental (vertical) and social (horizontal) dimensions of their religion? Do they accept, reject, or doubt traditional Christian teachings about the existence of God, the divinity of Christ, loving thy neighbor, and doing good for others? Several sociological studies have suggested that there is considerable consensus among Catholics (and Protestants) about such transcendental beliefs as the existence of God and the divinity of Christ.[5] However, some studies which have tried to examine these beliefs in more detail, suggested that there may be considerable ambiguity and confusion regarding these beliefs. One researcher, for example, stated that while 80% of the people in his study could be called "believers," a majority had very vague and ambiguous beliefs about the supernatural.[6] Studies about the social beliefs of Protestants and Catholics are less prevalent in the sociological literature, and the data we do have are inconclusive. Some of the research suggests that religion may be a vital social force;[7] however, other research strongly suggests that religion has become compartmentalized and may play a relatively insignificant role in most people's social interactions.[8]

Another set of questions we asked concerned the relative importance that Catholics attach to their beliefs along each of these dimensions. Do Catholics think it is more important to believe in Christ and attend church regularly, or is it more important that a person love his neighbor? Which is more likely to prevent a person from achieving salvation: doubting the divinity of Christ or discriminating against a member of another race? One might argue that, although the Catholic Church has certainly included social issues in its teachings, it has tended to emphasize the importance of vertical beliefs and traditional ritualistic behavior patterns. Yet, there is evidence that many people in general, and members of the younger generation in particular, are placing more and more emphasis on beliefs about the social order.[9]

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[5] See Robert Lee, The Social Sources of Church Unity (Nashville: Abingdon, 1960); Will Herberg, Protestant-Catholic-Jew (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1956); Leo Rosten (ed.), Religions in America (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963); Murray Ross, Religious Beliefs of Youth (New York: Association Press, 1950). In their discussion of "The New Denominationalism" Charles Glock and Rodney Stark present evidence of denominational belief differences, but the data also suggest general consensus on many religious teachings. See Glock and Stark, Religion and Society in Tension (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965).

[6] Ross, op. cit.

[7] For example, Gerhard Lenski, The Religious Factor (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1963). For a discussion of the "negative" consequences of religious beliefs in terms of their possible generation of prejudicial attitudes, see Charles Glock and Rodney Stark, Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism (New York: Harper and Row, 1966).

[8] See, for example, W. Widick Schroeder and Victor Obenhaus, Religion in American Culture (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1964).

These questions are relevant on the local level in terms of the clergy's (in)ability to organize programs of worship that are meaningful to the laity. They are also significant on a larger scale for the modern concern for Christian unity. Some people would argue that beliefs about the supernatural will be the major avenue or obstacle to Church unity,[10] while other writers have suggested that whatever Protestants and Catholics believe about the supernatural is less relevant to ecumenism than their common concern for social problems.[11]

These questions are of both sociological and theological significance. Let us, therefore, look at the answers our Oklahoma respondents made to items regarding the vertical and horizontal dimensions of their religion. We will also be concerned with the relationship between these beliefs stated as general principles and attitudes that may be derived from them and refer to concrete social groups. Then we can discuss the relevance of these responses to the mission of the Church in the contemporary community.

TRANSCENDENTAL (VERTICAL) BELIEFS

When we examined a series of questions about the supernatural, we found that Catholics in our Oklahoma study tended to affirm most of the traditional Christian beliefs about the supernatural (see Table 1). At least 85% of these Catholics reported 1) that there is a life after death, 2) that a personal God exists, 3) that Christ is the divine Son of God, and 4) that the Devil actually exists. About three-quarters of these Catholics also agreed 1) that the miracles attributed to Christ actually happened just as the Bible says they did, and they affirmed the doctrine of Original Sin by indicating 2) that a child is born into the world guilty of sin. In general, then, many of the Christian teachings about the supernatural were affirmed by these Catholics. Catholic consensus on these items was slightly lower than that achieved by the members of the Assembly of God and the Lutheran and Baptist Churches. However, Catholic consensus was somewhat higher than that achieved by the Methodists, Christians, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians.[12] This pattern of belief consensus was very similar to the pattern reported by Glock and Stark on the basis of data they gathered in a recent study in four California counties.[13]

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[9] Much of the student unrest on college campuses and student involvement in such activities as the Peace Corps, Vista, and local social-action programs can be interpreted as a manifestation of growing concern for social issues.

[10] Such ecumenical organizations as The Consultation on Church Union have spent considerable time attempting to achieve mutual understanding between various Christian denominations regarding theological issues. Articles appearing in the Journal of Ecumenical Studies also tend to place considerable emphasis on the theological and philosophical aspects of Church unity.

[11] See Robert Lee, op. cit., and Jeffrey K. Hadden, "A Protestant Paradox: Divided They Merge," Transaction, 4 (July/August, 1967), pp. 63-69.

SOCIAL-GOSPEL (HORIZONTAL) BELIEFS

Tables 2, 3 and 4 contain data pertaining to several horizontal belief items in our questionnaire. (The statement of these beliefs in our questionnaire tended to be in an abstract manner. The responses in Tables 2, 3 and 4, therefore, reflect assent to or rejection of very general Christian principles.) Ninety-four percent of the Catholics felt that "what we do in this life will determine our fate in the hereafter." Seventy-two percent of the Catholics felt that "loving thy neighbor" is "absolutely necessary" for salvation. Eighty-four percent reported that they were sure that this principle meant that the members of all races should be treated the same. A smaller majority also indicated that "doing good for others" is essential for salvation. Four out of ten Catholics also suggested that discrimination against other races could "definitely prevent" salvation, while over 80% reported that discrimination would at least "possibly prevent" one from achieving salvation. In short, we can say that there was at least moderate consensus among these Catholics on several questions related to social-gospel beliefs. This consensus was somewhat less than that achieved on the vertical belief dimension, but it does suggest that Catholics generally agree that such beliefs have considerable religious as well as social significance. From an index of horizontal beliefs located in Tables 2, 3 and 4, we found that the members of the Assembly of God and Methodist churches had slightly higher consensus on the beliefs than Catholics did. Catholic consensus was somewhat greater than consensus in the Presbyterian, Episcopal, Lutheran, Baptist and Christian churches.[14]

IMPORTANCE OF THESE BELIEFS

The data we have presented so far tell us something about what Protestants and

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[12] On an eight-item index of vertical beliefs, the following mean scores were computed for each denomination (high index scores reflecting high consensus): Assembly of God (92%), Lutheran (86%), Baptist (81%), Catholic (73%), Christian (71%), Presbyterian (66%), Methodist (64%), and Episcopal (50%). These data are examined in some detail in Davidson, Schlangen, and D'Antonio, "On the Sociology of Ecumenism" and "Some Implications of Interfaith Perceptions...," op. cit.

[13] Glock and Stark, Religion and Society in Tension, op. cit., especially Chapter 5.

[14] The following mean scores were computed for each denomination on the four-item index of horizontal beliefs: Assembly of God (69%), Methodist (66%), Catholic (61%), Christian (59%), Episcopal (53%), Presbyterian (50%), Lutheran (48%), and Baptist (36%). See Davidson, Schlangen, and D'Antonio, "On the Sociology of Ecumenism," op. cit.

Catholics believe along each of these two dimensions of their religion. However, we have yet to discuss the relative importance that these groups attach to each dimension.

In general, further comparisons of the data in Tables 2, 3 and 4 tended to suggest that, although Catholics had slightly lower consensus on several horizontal belief items than they did on the vertical belief items in Table 1, they seemed to consider the horizontal beliefs to be as important a determinant of one's salvation as one's beliefs about the supernatural. For example, compare the "definitely prevent" column for the item on discrimination in Table 4 and the "absolutely necessary" column for the item on the reception of sacraments in Table 3. The proportion who felt that discrimination would "definitely prevent" salvation is identical to the proportion who felt it is "absolutely necessary" to receive the sacraments regularly. In fact, the proportion reporting that discrimination will "definitely prevent" salvation is slightly higher than the proportion who felt it is "absolutely necessary" for a person to belong to either a Christian Church or the Catholic Church. The same was true when we compared the "loving thy neighbor" and "doing good for others" items with the items concerning church membership.

Perhaps the single most convincing item in our questionnaire dealing with the relative importance of the vertical and horizontal belief dimensions is found in Table 5. Here we asked the people which they thought was more important to God: the way they treat their fellow man or how regularly they attend church. Fifty percent of the Catholics said that the way they treat their fellow man is God's primary concern. Another 45% said that church attendance and one's treatment of his fellow man are equally important to God. No one said that church attendance alone was God's primary concern. This pattern was found consistently in the response patterns of our Protestant respondents as well.

To this point in our discussion we have addressed two questions: 1) what do Catholics and Protestants believe along the vertical and horizontal dimensions of their religion? and 2) what is the relative importance they attach to each of these dimensions? On the basis of the data we have presented we can conclude 1) that Catholics in this sample tended to achieve slightly greater consensus on beliefs about the supernatural than on the items about man's social relationships, but 2) that these Catholics also tended to attach as much, if not more, importance to the horizontal beliefs as to the vertical beliefs in terms of the possibilities of a person achieving salvation. Although there were some denominational differences, in general Protestant responses to these questions were quite similar to those of Catholics.

DISCUSSION

The data lead us to the question of whether or not the vertical and horizontal dimensions of religious belief are related to each other in any way, and, if they are, whether this relationship is a positive or negative one. In other words, to what extent do beliefs about the social order flow from beliefs about the supernatural? Or, to what extent are these two dimensions independent of each other?

The Bible suggests that if man loves God he must also love his neighbor and that love of one's neighbor necessarily implies love of God.[15] At least two traditions have grown out of this thesis. Fundamentalist groups have relied primarily on man's direct relationship to the supernatural (e.g., through experiences of being "saved") and placed less emphasis on horizontal beliefs about one's fellow man. On the other hand, "liberal" denominations like the Episcopal Church, have placed greater emphasis on the horizontal dimension and argued that if one loves his neighbor and contributes to the welfare of other men, this behavior reflects a love of God. The question of whether or not love of one's neighbor implies love of God is a theological issue; but the extent to which beliefs about the supernatural have consequences for social attitudes and behavior is both a theological and a sociological problem. If we adopt the Biblical premise of a positive relationship between love of God and love of neighbor, we can construct the sociological hypothesis that those religious groups with the highest positive consensus on beliefs about the supernatural will also have the most favorable attitudes toward their fellow man.

To test the hypothesis that high consensus on vertical beliefs is directly related to such currently accepted social values as racial integration, we will examine Assembly of God, Catholic, and Episcopal responses to several items dealing with race relations in this country. On a vertical belief index consisting of several items, the Assembly of God achieved the highest consensus. Catholic consensus on this index was moderate, and the Episcopalians achieved the lowest consensus of all. We, therefore, can use the Assembly of God as an example of a "fundamentalist" group, the Episcopalians as an example of a "liberal" group, and the Catholics as an example of a "moderate" group in between these extremes. If our hypothesis is correct, then, the Assembly of God respondents should have the most favorable attitude toward the Negro. Catholic attitudes should be moderately favorable, and Episcopalians should have the least favorable attitude of all.

The data in Table 6, however, do not support our hypothesis. For example 93% of the Assembly of God respondents reported that "It would probably be better for Negroes to attend separate churches." One-third of the Episcopalians agreed with statement, while only 5% of the Catholics did. In a similar way, 62% of the Assembly of God people indicated that "It would be better all around if Negroes went to separate schools." Again

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15. For example, see the following Biblical passages: "... if I should have absolute faith so as to be able to move mountains, but have no love, I am nothing" (1 Cor: 13, 2); "He who says that he is in the light, yet hates his neighbor, is still in darkness. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and he has no cause for stumbling. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in it." (1 John: 3, 10); "His commandment is this, that we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he commanded us." (1 John: 3, 23); and "... love your enemies and pray for your persecutors, and thus prove yourselves children of your Father in heaven." (Matt:5, 46)

one-third of the Episcopalians agreed while only 12% of the Catholics affirmed this statement. The differences between these responses are striking and consistent. In both of these items dealing with separate facilities for Negroes and whites, the group with the highest consensus on our vertical belief index had the most "unfavorable" attitude toward the Negro. Among the Episcopalians, who had the lowest score on our vertical belief index, a majority maintained beliefs which civil rightists have categorized as being very favorable. Catholics, with moderately high consensus on the vertical belief index, had the most favorable attitudes of all. This pattern of response was quite consistent throughout the other items in Table 5. In short, these data do not support our hypothesis that consensus on vertical beliefs is directly related to favorable attitudes toward the Negro.[16]

Nor do the data clearly demonstrate that vertical belief consensus and attitudes toward the Negro are inversely related. If this were the case, Episcopalians would have had the most favorable attitudes, with Catholics ranking second and Assembly of God members third. As we have already seen, this pattern was not found. Catholics had the most favorable attitudes, and Episcopalians ranked second. We must conclude therefore, 1) that attitudes toward the Negro may be independent of consensus on vertical beliefs, or 2) that they may be related, but not consistently. The evidence suggests that (lack of) consensus on the vertical belief index does not always or necessarily lead to (lack of) favorable attitudes toward one's fellow man.

All of this suggests that if clergy work under the assumption that belief in God and the divinity of Christ will necessarily lead to favorable attitudes on important social issues, they may be operating on a faulty assumption. The assumption that love of neighbor flows from "love of God" and necessarily leads to concrete attitudes favorable to specific neighbors is not supported by our data. If the development of concern for "the real issues of life" (i.e., race relations) is one of the goals of the Church, emphasis on vertical beliefs and abstract horizontal beliefs in parish programs is not a sufficient basis for the development of this concern. If Catholics (and Protestants) are to become aware of and concerned about important social issues, time and effort must be devoted to programs that are specifically directed at these issues.

Finally, Table 7 contains several items about the influence that Catholics think their Church should and can have on social issues. Sixty-two percent disagreed with the statement that "Churches should stick to religion and not concern themselves with social, economic, and political questions." In the second item, nearly 70% disagreed with a statement that "Aside from preaching there is little that churches can really do about social and economic problems." Consistent with these findings is the fact that 71% of the Catholics in our sample reported that "the Christian church is not doing enough to help the Negro." These data suggest that these Catholics felt the church should be involved in social issues, and, that it can play an effective role in helping man solve his socio-economic problems.

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[16] This finding tends to reinforce Glock and Stark's discussion of "particularism" and "religious orthodoxy" (consensus on what we have called vertical beliefs) in Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism, op. cit., pp. 19-40.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A number of sociological conclusions seem warranted from the data and discussion we have presented.

The more fundamentalistic Protestant groups reached higher levels of consensus on beliefs about the supernatural than did Catholics, but the level of Catholic consensus was higher than that exhibited by Episcopalians. At the same time, Catholics in these two Oklahoma towns were more "liberal" on race and other social issues than the Protestant denominations in our sample, while members of the Assembly of God were least liberal of all and Episcopalian attitudes were moderately liberal. On the basis of these data, then, high consensus on "vertical" beliefs does not seem to be consistently related to "liberal" stances on race and other social issues.

Catholic respondents' beliefs and attitudes on race were also more "liberal" than those of Catholics in Detroit described by Lenski[17] and Catholic emigrants to Tallahasee, Florida, in Liu's analysis.[18] On the other hand, they seem to conform closely to patterns of Catholic attitudes reported more recently by Glock and Stark[19] on similar issues for California respondents.

It has been argued that Catholics are becoming more and more middle class.[20] The fact that the more recent studies (Oklahoma and California) find Catholics more "liberal" than earlier studies of Lenski and Liu might indicate that movement into the middle class helps to account for the increased "liberalism." Indeed, the social class characteristics of the Catholics in the earlier studies are lower than the characteristics of Catholics in the later California and Oklahoma studies. In turn, the Catholics in this study were notably higher in social class standing than were the members of the Assembly of God.

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[17] Lenski, op. cit., p. 71.

[18] William T. Liu, "The Community Reference System, Religiosity, and Race Attitudes," Social Forces, XXXIX (1961), 324-328.

[19] Glock and Stark, op. cit., especially Chapter 5.

[20] Norval Glenn and Ruth Hyland, "Religious Preference and Worldly Success: Some Evidence from National Surveys," ASR, XXXII (Feb., 1967), 73-85; Davidson and Schlangen, "The Status of Catholics in Two Oklahoma Communities," in William T. Liu (ed.), Catholics, USA (New York: Wiley, 1967); Thomas O'Dea, "The Church in the Changing Community: An Area of Sociological Research," Publications in the Social Sciences I, Department of Political Philosophy and the Social Sciences (New York: Fordham University Press, 1957), reprinted from Thought, XXXI:121 (Summer, 1965), 251-270.

Another possible factor in the explanation is the relationship of the structure of the teaching church in Oklahoma and the stands on social issues taken by the laity who are heir to this structure. Dewey[21] has shown that the beliefs of the laity to a high degree reflect the teachings of its clergy. The Catholic clergy in Oklahoma are generally considered to be quite liberal. But the educational and occupational characteristics of the middle class may be seen to be preconditioning factors in that they affect the kinds of impact the clergy may have. As indicated earlier this contention seems to be supported by our data both for Protestants and Catholics. Oklahoma Catholics are higher in the class hierarchy than Catholics in Lenski's and Liu's earlier studies, and are more "liberal," on these issues at least.

Given the "Bible Belt" minority status of Catholics in Oklahoma, their attitudes on race and other social issues seem very liberal, and generally tend to reflect middle class United States attitudes.

Generally our data show few differences as a function of the rural and urban conditions of the respondents. No significant differences appear between respondents in Poteau (rural) as against respondents in Edmond (urban). Correlatively, our data from Oklahoma correspond quite closely with the findings of Glock and Stark in their California study.

Finally, an interesting paradox presents itself particularly in the Catholic data. The liberal clergy encourage the attitude that the "laity has the right to question church teachings in some or all matters." In our study 75% of the Catholics agreed with this statement. But the attitude itself is double-pronged; it opens minds, but not necessarily on all issues. The critical approach may lead to a refusal to accept horizontal (social) as well as vertical beliefs, more likely horizontal than vertical. It seems less likely that the laity will challenge the Dogma of the Assumption than that they will challenge the teachings on birth control, or the "new" teachings on race. It must be remembered that the Church is only one agency of society trying to communicate with "its" people. Neighbors, one's ethnic group, one's relatives, the community and mass media all have messages for "their" people. When messages diverge, there conflict arises.

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[21] Gerald Dewey, "Incongruity and Conflict in the Pastoral Role: An Investigation of Social Change," unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Department of Sociology, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana.

TABLES

Table 1: Catholic Beliefs about the Supernatural (percent)

VERTICAL BELIEFS	% (N - 64)
A. Beliefs about God	
1) I know God exists and I have no doubts	81
2) I have some doubts, but I feel God exists	5
B. Beliefs about Christ	
1) Jesus is the Divine Son of God and I have no doubts	97
C. There is a life beyond death (completely or probably true)	95
D. The miracles actually happened just as the Bible says they did	78
E. The Devil actually exists (completely or probably true)	86
F. A child is born into the world guilty of sin (completely or probably true)	78

Table 2: Catholic Beliefs about the Social Order (percent)

HORIZONTAL BELIEFS	TRUE (N = 64)	FALSE
A. What we do in this life will determine our fate in the hereafter.	94	2
B. "Loving thy neighbor" means that we should treat all races the same.	87	6

Table 3: Catholic Beliefs about Requirements for Salvation
(Vertical and Horizontal Beliefs) (percent)

	ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY	POSSIBLY HELP (N=64)	NO INFLUENCE
A. Vertical Dimension			
1) Being a member of a Christian church	31	41	14
2) Being a member of your particular church	33	47	11
3) Regular reception of the sacraments	39	50	5
B. Horizontal Dimension			
1) Loving thy neighbor	72	20	2
2) Doing good for others	53	36	5

Table 4: Catholic Beliefs about Barriers to Salvation
(Vertical and Horizontal Beliefs) (percent)

	DEFINITELY PREVENT	POSSIBLY PREVENT (N=64)	NO INFLUENCE
A. Vertical Dimension			
1) Breaking the Sabbath	22	62	11
B. Horizontal Dimension			
1) Discriminating against other races	39	45	8
2) Being anti-semitic	19	52	8

Table 5: The Relative Importance of Church Attendance and Treatment of One's Fellow Man (percent)

A. God is more concerned with the way people treat their fellow man	50
B. Both are equally important to God	45
C. God is more concerned with attendance at church	--

Table 6: Attitudes toward the Negro by Denomination and Consensus on Vertical Belief Index (percent)

	Consensus on Vertical Beliefs		
	HIGH	MODERATE	LOW
	A/God	Cath.	Epis.
N =	(16)	(64)	(40)
A. It would be better for Negroes to attend separate churches (true)	93	5	33
B. It would be better all around if Negroes went to separate schools (true)	62	12	33
C. The Bible makes it clear that God meant for the races to be separate (true)	69	10	25
D. It's too bad, but Negroes have inferior intelligence compared to whites (true)	56	20	26
E. We can be proud of what we have done for the Negro in recent years (true)	75	44	37
F. Most Negro neighborhoods are run down because Negroes simply don't take care of property (true)	82	36	45
G. Negroes would advance as far as whites if they had the same opportunities as whites (disagree)	31	9	16

Table 7: Catholic Attitudes toward Church Influence in Social Issues (percent)

	AGREE	DISAGREE (N=64)	UNCERTAIN
A. Churches should stick to religion and not concern themselves with social, economic and political questions	23	62	11
B. Aside from preaching, there is little that churches can really do about social and economic problems	16	69	14
C. The Christian Church is not doing enough to help the Negro	71	20	*
D. It is proper for churches to state their positions on practical political questions to local, state, and national government	59	27	12

*Does not apply

KATHLEEN HEALY

Understanding Town & Country Religious Attitudes through Literature

When I was invited to speak on "Understanding Community in Town and Country" at this National Consultation on the Church in Community Life, I was at first fascinated with the assignment but uncertain as to the best approach to this unusual topic. But when I read the Consultation study guide, Ecumenical Designs, I responded at once to the imperative propositions for ecumenical confrontation proposed by the authors. I became aware immediately that the implications of these propositions are concretely expressed in much of our twentieth century literature. Certain propositions impressed me more forcibly than others, calling to my imagination particular short stories, novels, and dramas which symbolize and illuminate precisely the types of problems being discussed in the meetings on the Church in Community Life convening here at Ohio State University this week.

This afternoon I should like to choose three of these imperative propositions and attempt to demonstrate their dynamic expression in the short stories of one Southern fiction writer, Flannery O'Connor. I might have chosen other writers, for example, William Faulkner, who also writes against the background of the small town in Southern United States. However, I selected Flannery O'Connor because I believe that, more than any other American fiction writer, she exemplifies the challenge to Christianity offered today in town and country as contrasted with metropolitan areas. The three imperative propositions I have chosen are the following:

1. In non-metropolitan areas the surviving people and institutions, in search

> of security in the dynamic movement of society, become defensive, provincial, and impotent. They lack a sense of the growing edge. The Church must become the agent of change.
>
> 2. Non-metropolitan areas tend to be comprised of "not-yets," "has-beens," and "left-overs" in regard to both people and churches. When administratively and functionally separated from the resources of their natural regions, these patterns intensify. Therefore, denominations must agree on judicatory boundaries based on functional regions and funnel resources to the areas of greatest need.
>
> 3. The Church in non-metropolitan areas lacks the efficiency and effectiveness demanded by its own divine imperative and by mass society. Therefore, the ecumenical planning process is imperative.[1]

I believe that anyone familiar with the fiction of Flannery O'Connor (who knew from birth the small town culture and mores of Georgia and other Southern States) is already cognizant of the meaningfulness of these three propositions, even if he has had no actual personal experience of town and country life. I have lived all my life in metropolitan areas, and yet as a teacher of American literature I feel quite at home in relating the imperative propositions suggested in Ecumenical Designs to the fiction and drama which I teach every day. My conclusion is that clergymen or laymen planning to participate in the Christian mission in the small towns of America can learn a great deal about both the individual people and the communities with which they will be involved by reading the fiction of Flannery O'Connor and other writers who use town and country backgrounds sensitively and perceptively. The relationship between American literature on the one hand, and the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate or the National Consultation on the Church in Community Life on the other hand, is therefore not so tenuous as it might seem at first glance.

The three stories by Flannery O'Connor which I have chosen for discussion are "The River" and "The Displaced Person," both included in the collection, A Good Man Is Hard to Find,[2] and "Revelation," taken from the collection, Everything that Rises Must Converge.[3]

"The River" presents an emerging secular society in its corrupting aspect as it makes inroads on a small town in Mississippi. The child who is the center of the story cannot reconcile the code of life of his Godless, sophisticated parents with that of the provincial, superstitious, really idolatrous Christian religion exemplified by his almost illiterate baby-sitter and by a small town evangelist and religious healer. Tragedy results for the

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1. Ecumenical Designs: Imperatives for Action in Non-Metropolitan America (New York: Consultation Steering Committee, 1967), pp. 3-5.

2. Flannery O'Connor, A Good Man is Hard to Find and Other Stories (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1955).

3. Flannery O'Connor, Everything that Rises Must Converge (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1965).

child.

Bevel, the little five-year-old protagonist, is an only child who lives in a modern efficiency apartment with his indifferent father and alcoholic mother. He is farmed out for the day to an underprivileged woman, Mrs. Connin, who lives with her four children in a riverside shack. Mrs. Connin takes Bevel to an evangelistic prayer meeting conducted by a "very special" young preacher who is a "healer." Before attending this ceremony, the little boy is captivated by a picture of Jesus as a carpenter which he spies in Mrs. Connin's shack. He asks who the man in the picture is, and the old baby sitter, shocked at his ignorance, reads to him a small book titled, The Life of Jesus Christ for Readers under Twelve, dated 1832! Up until now, Bevel had thought that "Jesus Christ" was a word similar to "Damn" or "O God." He is fascinated to discover that he himself was actually made by this carpenter named Jesus Christ, and not by Dr. Sladewell, a fat man with a yellow moustache who used to give him allergy shots.

At the prayer meeting held on a river's edge, the little boy is thrilled to hear the dynamic young preacher declare that the River of Faith and Life and Love is the River of Jesus' blood which leads to the Kingdom of Christ. When the evangelist immerses the boy's head in the water and baptizes him, little Bevel senses that something important has happened to him for the first time in his life. His intuition is confirmed when the pracher declares, "You count now. You didn't even count before!" When the boy returns home, his father and mother are both amused and mildly outraged at the account of his baptism.

The next morning Bevel rises early to find both mother and father in bed with their usual hangovers. Realizing that his parents will not appear until about 1:00 p. m., he wanders about the apartment, wondering what to do with himself. Suddenly he realizes what he wants to do. Baptized in the river, he was someone. Now he is no one. He determines to go back to the river, baptize himself, and keep on going until he finds the Kingdom of Christ in the water. The story closes as the little boy plunges into the river and surrenders to the current. His delinquent parents will never see him again.

This story of a confused little boy is at once tragic, symbolic, and grotesque. It points up through sharp dramatic contrast the naive, simple religion of an uneducated, small town people which is nevertheless anchored in a solid faith in the mystery of existence. Only those who believe in Jesus can be healed. Only those baptized in the blood of Christ can enter into His Kingdom. Contrasted with the exciting prayer meeting on the river bank is the sterile gayety of the partying at Bevel's home where liquor flows freely and the water of baptism is a blasphemous joke. The little boy's unformed personality cannot bear the tension created by the two ways of living between which he is mercilessly catapulted. A lost little fellow, his great need is to "count" with someone. His choice is inevitable.

Flannery O'Connor does not present an oversimplified picture of "good country people" as contrasted with a materialistic, pragmatic, hedonistic society extending its clutches toward the "good plain folks" of rural Southern United States. Her technique is far more subtle. Rather, she points up the dilemma of the uninitiated person caught between the seductive invitation of a crude, primitive Christianity and that of a secularism which cancels out Christian faith as pure nonsense.

In the short story called "The Displaced Person," Miss O'Connor offers characterizations of at least five different types of persons encountered in a small Southern town. Mrs. McIntyre, who operates a small dairy farm, is provincial, defensive, and insecure. She has had three husbands and has learned to practice the art of suspicion magnificently. She practices it in a special way on her employees, Mr. and Mrs. Shortley, who are not quite white trash; on Astor and Sulk, Negro ne'er-do-wells; and on the Guizacs, a family of displaced persons from Poland who have escaped a German prison camp. The latter have been sponsored as American immigrants by the admirable but easy-going priest of the town, who is always attempting to convert Mrs. McIntyre to Catholicism.

"The Displaced Person" is a profound analysis of the unconscious depths of hostility aroused in people incapable of transcending the prejudices of their narrow environment. It is shockingly realistic in its revelation of the shattering discrepancies between the conscious motivations of these characters concealed like huge dark icebergs below the surface of their personalities and their real motivations. A story like "The Displaced Person" can convince one more graphically than ten sociological treatises that those who perceive racial and class prejudice as a simple matter of wrong versus right are hopelessly naive.

Mrs. McIntyre's closed little world is burst asunder by the arrival of the Polish refugee family on her ill-managed farm. The hard work and efficiency of the new foreigners are affronts to the lazy white dairy farmer and his wife, and to the somnolent, illiterate Negroes. Slowly the natives mass their ammunition for attack. Mr. Shortley, the white laborer, is immediately threatened by the newcomer who turns out more work in a few days than he does in a month. At home in their shack at night, Mr. and Mrs. Shortley rationalize their menacing situation:

"I'd rather have a nigger if it was me," Mr. Shortley said.

"She says it's ten million more like them Displaced Persons," Mrs. Shortley answered. "She says that there priest can get her all she wants."

"She better quit messin with that there priest," Mr. Shortley said.

"He don't look smart," she said, "kind of foolish."

"I ain't going to have the Pope of Rome tell me how to run no dairy," Mr. Shortley said.

Mrs. Shortley felt that "religion was essentially for those people who didn't have the brains to avoid evil without it. For people like herself, for people of gumption, it was a social occasion providing the opportunity to sing; but if she had ever given it much thought, she would have considered the devil the head of it and God the hanger-on..."

Every time Mr. Guizac, the Displaced Person, smiled, the whole of Europe stretched out in Mrs. Shortley's imagination, mysterious and evil, the devil's experiment station. Over there, the people were full of crooked ways. They had never advanced or reformed their religion. The devil would be responsible for that! And here was "that priest," bringing foreigners to the State of Mississippi where they did not belong, threatening to uproot niggers, and planting the Whore of Babylon in the midst of the righteous! Standing on top of a hill at sundown as she elaborates her fantasies, Mrs. Shortley even goes so far as to experience a prophetic vision. She envisions the Pole and the priest as come to destroy the children of God. She never develops even a minimal awareness of her real motivation, which is plain even to the moronic farm boy: she is simply afraid that her lazy husband will lose his job. When her employer, Mrs. McIntyre, finally decides to fire Mr. Shortley, his outraged wife suffers a stroke and dies.

The turning point of the story occurs when the Displaced Person, acting according to the mores of his own culture, makes a proposal which appears monstrous to Mrs. McIntyre. Mr. Guizac has a sixteen-year-old cousin who has been rotting in a prison camp in Poland for three years. Her family have been tortured in three different camps, and her mother and father have both died in one of them. Mr. Guizac asks one of the Negroes if he will pay for half of the girl's transportation to America. In return, the cousin will marry the Negro boy. The Displaced Person is simply attempting to perform an act of Christian charity. When Mrs. McIntyre hears of the plan, she goes wild with rage. The conversation which ensues between her and Mr. Guizac reveals an apparently hopeless ecumenical chasm. Mrs. McIntyre confronts her employee:

> "Mr. Guizac! You would bring this poor innocent child over here and try to marry her to a half-witted thieving black stinking nigger! What kind of monster are you!... I cannot understand how a man who calls himself a Christian can marry a poor innocent girl to something like that. I cannot!"
>
> After a second Mr. Guizac shrugged and let his arms drop as if he were tired. "She no care black," he said. "She in prison camp three year."
>
> Mrs. McIntyre felt a peculiar weakness behind her knees. "Mr. Guizac," she said, "if I have to speak to you about this again, you'll have to find another place yourself. Do you understand?"
>
> She had the impression that he didn't see her there. "This is my place," she said. "I say who will come here and who won't."
>
> "Ya," he said.
>
> "You have a good job. You should be grateful to be here," she added, "but I'm not sure you are."
>
> "Ya," he said and gave his little shrug and turned back to the tractor.

It is inevitable that Mrs. McIntyre will determine to get rid of Mr. Guizac. From this moment an unspoken struggle develops between her and the priest. The old man gradually succeeds in making her recognize a certain moral obligation to retain Mr. Guizac on the farm. But Mr. Shortley returns to convince her that the Displaced Person was sent to the farm by the devil himself.

He also insinuates his damning accusations in his conversations with the Negroes, easily convincing them that they too will be fired because of the Pole. Like his deceased wife, Mr. Shortley is innocent of his own motivations. He never once suspects that his desire for revenge is the source of his accusations.

The horrible, grotesque climax is reached one bright morning when Mr. Guizac, squatting on the ground beside a small tractor to put in a new part, does not perceive that a larger tractor, carelessly parked by Mr. Shortley, has slipped its brakes and is plowing directly toward his unprotected body. Mrs. McIntyre, Mr. Shortley, and the Negro Sulk become aware at the same moment of what is happening. Each has time to warn the Displaced Person. But all three suddenly freeze in a horrible collusion, and Mr. Guizac is mowed down before them. The theme of the story is nakedly symbolized in Mrs. McIntyre's response to the priest when he attempts to talk to her about Christ:

> "As far as I am concerned," she glared at him fiercely, "Christ was just another D. P."

Here again the bizarre and the grotesque are used to drive home Flannery O'Connor's message. Her theory is that Christians today are so embedded in layers of complacency that only shock technique will awaken them to awareness. The majority of her stories end in climactic shock. "The Displaced Person" is a startling declaration to all who are dedicated to the Christian Apostolate that the rational alone is impotent in spreading the Kingdom of Christ. All of us, whether from metropolitan areas or town and country, are to some degree slaves of our irrational prejudices. "The Displaced Person" illustrates how the closed society of a country sub-culture can build up its own community fantasy life, hide its real motivations beneath strata of ignorant self-righteousness, and even execute horrible atrocities against the outsider in the name of Christianity. The task of understanding the mainsprings of human motivation is one of the greatest ecumenical challenges to establishing religious community realistically in town and country today. Often, psychological understanding must precede the message of faith.

In many of her short stories, Flannery O'Connor places a corrupting metropolitan sophistication in conflict with a provincial naivete, and the town and country population sometimes emerges with a sincerity and integrity not at first discernible. This approach is evident in "Everything that Rises Must Converge," a short story in which a blase college-educated son returns from the North to a small Southern town to engage in continual strife with his apparently simple-minded mother. In the final clash of wills, the mother - not the son - proves to be the stronger of the two. "The Enduring Chill" presents a similar theme. The same message is dramatized in reverse, however, in the story called "Revelation," one of Miss O'Connor's best. I have chosen this story as a final example because it exposes without mercy a smug complacency masked by a counterfeit Christianity.

Mrs. Turpin, the main character of this story, is a respectable small town woman who is proud that she owns her own home and a few acres. She pursues her own special brand of Christianity. At night, when she cannot go to sleep, she imagines a conversation between herself and Jesus. He presents her with a situation in which she can no longer be herself. She must choose between being either a nigger or white trash. "All right," she finally answers Jesus, "I'll be a neat clean respectable Negro woman, like myself but black." Mrs. Turpin also occupies her sleepless moments by classifying the types of people she knows according to a hierarchy of preference. Most colored people are at the bottom of her scale, the "trashy ones"; then come the white trash; next the home owners; then the home-and-land owners (to which she and her husband, Claud, belong); and finally the people with more money, bigger houses, and more land. These are at the top of her golden ladder.

As the story opens, Mrs. Turpin and her husband, Claud, are sitting in an outer office awaiting their turn to see a doctor. A conversation develops among Mrs. Turpin, two trashy-looking white women, and a pleasant, well-dressed lady. With the latter is her daughter, a fat, ugly, pock-marked girl who is a student at Wellesley College. The girl is crude and boorish in the extreme. As the discussion proceeds, Mrs. Turpin pours out indiscriminately her sickly platitudes; her complaints against Negroes; her contempt for all and sundry inferiors; her complacent satisfaction with her family, her possessions, and her own good disposition. She casts self-righteous verbal thrusts at the ugly college girl, admonishing her to be more lady-like. As the older woman climaxes her monologue by expressing public and ecstatic thanks to Jesus for all the gifts he has granted her, the ugly girl suddenly can tolerate no more. Without warning, she violently flings the book she is reading at Mrs. Turpin and springs for her throat. As the girl falls in an epileptic fit, she looks straight at Mrs. Turpin for one horrible moment and croaks, "Go back to hell where you came from, you old wart hog."

A new and frightening world is opened up to Mrs. Turpin by the girl's accusation. She is unable to forget the direct damnation of herself. Why should she, a respectable, hard-working, church-going woman be singled out for so appalling a condemnation by the epileptic? "I am not," she repeats to herself tearfully, "a wart hog from hell." Yet she cannot repress an overpowering sense of guilt. "How am I a hog and me both?" she demands in her fantasy-dialogue with Jesus. "How am I saved and from hell too? If trash is what you want, why didn't you make me trash? Go on, call me a hog again! Call me a wart hog from hell!" Then, in a final surge of fury, she roars, "Who do you think you are?" With this crowning blasphemy, Mrs. Turpin (like Mrs. Shortley) suddenly experiences a vision. But her vision is not ironic: it is directly in touch with a new comprehension of reality. She sees a long procession of souls on a vast swinging bridge leading toward heaven. The positions of all the classes of people are in direct reverse to those of her earlier fantasy. The "niggers and white trash" lead the grand procession, while she and Claud bring up the rear. And with them are all the people of good order and common sense and respectable behavior.

The image of the wart hog from hell is characteristic of the shock technique of Flannery O'Connor. The impotence of Mrs. Turpin's religion - rather, its nauseating self-centeredness - is blasted with one ugly phrase by the ugly girl who appraises her so precisely. Mrs. Turpin's revelation is indeed an actual grace, and her self-recognition provides one of the rare happy endings in Flannery O'Connor's fiction. Not only is "Revelation" a story of universal implications concerning man's awareness of good and evil in himself; it is also a sharp analysis of the deviations of a pharisaical type of Christianity peculiar to a narrow, class-conscious sub-culture.

I believe that the relationship between the three stories I have discussed and the three imperative propositions I have selected from those proposed by the National Consultation on the Church in Community Life is clear. In all three stories, the characters are defensive, provincial, or impotent. They may be characterized as "not-yets," "has-beens," or "left-overs"; they do not represent a progressive and vitally alive population. Their Christianity lacks the effectiveness demanded by the divine imperative and by their own society. Of course, one cannot generalize concerning the populations of small towns from stories like Flannery O'Connor's. To use a cliche of Mrs. Shortley, "It takes all kinds to make a world" - and to make a small town, too. Other fiction writers of the South - Robert Penn Warren, Eudora Welty, Ellen Glasgow, Stark Young, George Washington Cable, Katherine Anne Porter - offer, perhaps, more romantic characterizations than Flannery O'Connor. She presents her own individual artistic perspective of certain types of characters who walk the town streets and plow the country farms in Georgia and Mississippi. They are real people. They are encountered by all who seek to spread the Word of Christ in the Southern States. And it is my thesis that American literature of the South is a valuable study for pastors working in town and country in that region.

To be sure, I have used [illegible] one area of the United States and one writer to illustrate my thesis, which indeed applies to all areas of our country. Years ago, Sinclair Lewis in novels like Main Street and Sherwood Anderson in Winesburg, Ohio told us graphically about life in small mid-western towns; Willa Cather took us farther West to know and understand characters bred from the soil of Nebraska and California; and Robert Frost re-created New England in narrative poems about people who never could have prospered anywhere except "North of Boston."

Today we understand better than ever before that training in the discipline of theology is not enough for the Christian pastor. Human understanding demands encounter and involvement with human beings both actually and vicariously. A degree of understanding of psychology and sociology is essential for the priest, the minister, and the lay apostle. And perhaps the area of the Humanities which is broadest and most perceptive in comprehending and understanding human nature is literature. In literature we see ourselves as in a mirror. The American apostle can deepen his understanding of the people confided to his care by gazing frequently and profoundly into the mirror of American literature.

BERNARD D. QUINN

The Local Catholic Community and the Process of Ecumenical Planning for Total Mission

An Experimental Proposal, in Response to the Concerns of the National Consultation on the Church in Community Life

A certain weasel, long afflicted with neurotic symptoms, was accustomed to regular consultation with his psychiatrist, a wise old owl. As therapy progressed, the weasel, becoming disaffected with the long probing, the attempt to achieve insight into unconscious motivation, and the wearisome effort to release emotional tension, demanded of the owl, "Tell me what I should do!"

Taken aback both by the unexpected nature and by the vehemence of the demand, the owl abandoned his customary reserve and ventured a direct advice. "I think, my dear weasel," he said at last, "that the only solution to your problem is to turn yourself into a frog."

The weasel was astonished at this advice and replied, "Thank you for your advice, which I fully intend to heed. One problem remains, however. I pray, sir, tell me how I go about turning myself into a frog."

To this the owl replied, with a certain measure of disdain, "My dear weasel, please be kind enough not to bother me with these operational problems!"

It is in context of the "operational problems" of mission in town and country that this National Consultation was conceived. "It is one thing to make bold sweeping statements about pressing... problems," states Perry L. Norton. "It is quite another thing to confront yourself, realistically, with the measures and the commitments you must make in order to accomplish alleged purposes."[1] It is for this reason that specialists in various academic disciplines as well as decision-makers concerned with the Church's day-to-day ministry have been asked to come together here for the purpose of exploring precisely how creative experimentation can help town and country leaders realistically to achieve what they set out to do.

It is my intention to offer for consideration one concrete proposal for research-experimentation at the level of the local community. This proposal is being offered in the context of the National Consultation on the Church in Community Life, which has placed central stress on the research and planning process, affirming that it "must be the directive catalyst in building a total ministry in the total community."[2]

It is also set in the context of the World Council of Churches' present study of "Missionary Structures," which was commissioned by the New Delhi Assembly in 1961.[3] The North American Working Group of this study, it seems to me, has been particularly successful in setting the research-planning process in a theological-historical-sociological context, showing it to be a part of God's action in the world in history. A theology of action-research has begun to emerge,[4] a carefully elaborated theory which has already been reality-tested against nine task-force experimental missions in various parts of the country.[5]

However strongly some of us might feel that the authors of the Consultation study document (*Ecumenical Designs*) were carried away by their sense of missionary urgency, even to the extent of proposing simplistic solutions not unlike that of turning weasels into frogs,[6] with their central point it is possible to express profound agreement:

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[1] Perry L. Norton (ed.), *Search,* A Report of the National Consultation on Personnel Needs in Church Planning and Research (New York: National Council of Churches, 1960), p. 119. [Copyrighted 1960 by the National Council of Churches; used with permission.]

[2] *Ecumenical Designs: Imperatives for Action in Non-Metropolitan America,* Study Document of the National Consultation on the Church in Community Life (New York: Consultation Steering Committee, 1967), p. 64. [Hereafter this document will be cited as ED.]

[3] See *The Church for Others: Two Reports on the Missionary Structure of the Congregation* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1967), especially pp. 56-129. [Hereafter this document will be cited as CFO.] See also: Thomas Wieser (ed.) *Planning for Mission,* Working Papers on the New Quest for Missionary Communities (New York: U. S. Conference for the World Council of Churches, 1966).

[4] CFO, pp. 57-68. See also: George D. Younger, "Toward a Style of Missionary Action," and "Action-Research and Evaluation in Mission," discussion papers for the MSC Steering Committee Meeting, May 25, 1967 (unpublished); Hans Schmidt, Hamburg, May, 1966, "Comments on the Process of the 'Planning Sciences'" (unpublished).

[5] Vermont (public education); New York (denominational structures); New York (Metropolitan Urban Service Training, MUST); Boston (theological education); Philadelphia (Metropolitan Associates of Philadelphia, MAP); Nashville (race relations); Chicago (community organization); Los Angeles (Los Angeles Goals Project); San Francisco (Christian presence in voluntary structures of the city).

> THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WIDEST POSSIBLE USE OF THE ECUMENICAL PROCESS OF CREATIVE PLANNING FOR MISSION AT ALL LEVELS -- LOCAL COMMUNITY, FUNCTIONAL ECONOMIC AREA, REGION, NATION, AND WORLD.

Hopefully the implementation of this proposal will enable the "non-metropolitan Church to find a new sense of direction so that it too can carry its load as a part of the whole Church of God in the world."[7]

Here one senses a reasoned optimism, born no doubt from a creative frustration about the way things have been going lately in town and country America. Instead of reacting defensively through fear of the unknown and blind loyalty to every traditional form of rural Church life, these leaders are proposing a "process" that should enable us - if not to solve every problem - at least to "get on top of" the situation, to understand what is happening, to re-think our theological goals of mission, and to implement our insights by careful and creative ecumenical experimentation. Personally, as a Catholic, I share their reasoned optimism, because I believe they are approaching a complex problem in a realistic way.

We are being asked to engage in an (1) ecumenical (2) process, (3) involving research and planning. A few comments on each of these elements.

Ecumenical. "It is always easier and faster to move unilaterally, but the dismal fact remains that the unilateral response has not pierced to the heart of the mission in non-metropolitan America. A remaining creative alternative is that of ecumenical planning for action to meet society's needs."[8]

Process. What is required is not just another study-group, but a "process" in which the search itself becomes the thing.[9] Theology is to become pilgrim theology. We are to be participants in the search for the ways and places where God calls us to join in His missionary work. The result is not so much a "formula" for success, as "an invitation for more participants."[10]

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[6] Some of the models proposed seem not to give sufficient importance to the sense of sincere "conviction of truth" possessed by some religious bodies; in other words, to ignore the formidable doctrinal barriers which lie at the heart of painful separation of Christians who share a common sense of urgency for mission and a deep desire for all possible ecumenical cooperation. Cf. ED, pp. 124 and 105.

[7] ED, p. 96.

[8] ED, p. 57.

[9] Cf. "The Place of Planning in the Church's Mission," in Perry L. Norton, op. cit., pp. 83-88.

Research and Planning. Pure research has for its goal the goal of pure science - to know. Action-research and planning seeks to know, to help the Church fulfill its mission even at the risk (in the Scriptural sense) of losing itself. With the Church this is always a theological as well as a sociological task. Sociology can provide means of measuring and analyzing the world; it is the task of theology to interpret the data in light of the "given" - message and mission. Research is an integral part of the planning process, which in turn involves decision-makers and authorities whose task it is to choose alternatives and reduce creative insights to practical realities.[11]

PROPOSAL

My proposal, therefore, is for a CAREFULLY CONTROLLED EXPERIMENT IN ONE LOCAL TOWN AND COUNTRY COMMUNITY, WHICH WOULD SHOW HOW ALL THE CHURCHES OF A COMMUNITY COULD ENGAGE IN THE ECUMENICAL PLANNING PROCESS FOR TOTAL MISSION.

Experiment. "It is in the nature of an experiment that it proceeds with a view to a new insight and yet leaves open the outcome. It anticipates change but it does not predict the nature of the change. In this it conforms to the stance of hope in the fulfillment of the goal of mission, while this fulfillment cannot be predetermined."[12]

Experimentation is one of the means whereby the Church - under guidance of the Spirit - becomes sensitive to rapid change and new approaches. It involves creative risk-taking, and must proceed with the assumption that "a full 75% of [the Church's] experiments in new forms of ministry will be failures."[13] At the same time, careful experimentation minimizes the danger of costly wide-scale adoption of trial-and-error "formulas" based on untested assumptions and promoted by popular enthusiasm. Experimentation does not provide a "formula" so much as an "example of possibilities"; it involves a risk, yet a reasonable one.

I would suggest that at the present time we urgently need such an experiment - a case study of Catholic involvement in the ecumenical planning process for total mission in a town and country community. We do have such case studies in the city (for example, St. Mark's parish in Kansas City); and we do have town and country case studies relating to specific issues (for example, the ecumenical Headstart project in southwestern Virginia). But to my knowledge there is nowhere in the town and country an example of Catholic involvement in the ecumenical planning process for total mission.

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[10] CFO, p. 58.
[11] ED, pp. 61-69.
[12] CFO, p. 75.
[13] ED, p. 86.

Carefully controlled. Creative though experimentation may be, it is still necessary that it be an orderly process. From the Catholic point of view, this means that it must have built-in provision for continual communication with Church authority, whose task is not only to approve, guide, enable, and encourage, but to "test the Spirit" as well.

It must also be controlled in the sense that its experimental and tentative nature is made clear both to those likely to be directly affected by it, and to the Church at large. Otherwise, spiritual harm may result to certain individuals in the local community who have not been properly prepared to meet the challenges of change, and whose right to disagree must be respected. Harm may also come to the Church at large if experimentation is widely and uncritically adopted as a "formula" before its assumptions have been thoroughly tested and evaluated.

Local community. National and regional Church leaders are for the most part willing to see creative experimentation and have already achieved a measure of success in the ecumenical planning process (witness this Consultation). Yet they can do little at the community level without the presence of local initiative. I also believe it is possible today to find local communities where the ecumenical spirit has grown to such an extent that planning for total mission has become a viable possibility. Hopefully this Consultation itself will promote cooperation at all levels of Church life in the interest of grass-roots experimentation.

Another reason for proposing local experimentation as a first step is that there is greater likelihood that conservative evangelical groups who place emphasis on the local congregation will be included.[14] I do not see how the process can possibly succeed without participation by evangelical Christians, any more than it can without participation by Catholics. At first glance, both conservative evangelicals and Catholics might be considered a hindrance because of apparent over-concern for doctrinal positions (as they define them). Yet it may well be that no truly solid progress can be expected without the witness which these two groups are especially able to provide.

THE PROCESS: SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

The process-description which follows is intended to put flesh and blood on the bones of this proposal. It is descriptive and tentative rather than definitive, because the nature of an experiment precludes any but the most tentative prediction of both the results and the process itself. Following the general outline of the Consultation study document and the WCC Missionary Structure Study, I would suggest that the process will contain these elements:

1. Initiation. In a community where there is a long-standing ecumenical cooperation

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[14] ED, p. 127.

among Christians - including Catholics and evangelicals - a core of leaders "truly representative of the real shape of the question"[15] determines to initiate an ecumenical planning process for total mission and requests assistance from resource persons (outside specialists) of various denominations.

2. Legitimization. Approval and guidance is sought from the appropriate ecclesiastical authorities, and their assistance enlisted in providing the resource persons who will be needed. (Obtaining resource persons will certainly be facilitated by the ecumenical cooperation already evident among town and country leaders at national and regional levels. In addition, the services available through the land-grant colleges should not be overlooked.)

Approval of key persons within each congregation is then sought. The help of a resource person can be obtained to determine who these key persons are.[16]

A broad basis of support is sought among all members of the participating congregations, and a process of continual communication and feed-back set up.[17]

3. Insight into the Situation: Listening to the World. The WCC Study Group discovered that the "process" begins with the effort to understand man's religious needs.[18]

This implies a search into the shape of religion (or lack of religion) as this is manifested in individuals living in this particular community. It includes an inquiry into the environmental factors which profoundly influence the individual's acceptance of the Christian message and his growth in Christian life: family, politics, education, recreation, economics, and health.[19] It implies an effort to understand how these elements are structured into concrete patterns of formal and informal social life in this community; and how values are actually communicated through interpersonal relationships, formal organizations, and mass media. Finally, there is the effort to discover the individual and societal problems to which the Church is not responding in terms of its unique religious ministry.

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[15] CFO, p. 59.

[16] One planning group asked a sociologist to determine key persons through the use of sociometric techniques. Cf. ED, p. 84.

[17] ED, pp. 83 and 72.

[18] CFO, p. 69.

[19] "The Church is obliged to understand the nature of the structures for which it would be servant. The institutional structures of society are not only the sum total of the individuals who presently compose them, but rather are the totality of all that institution's past experiences in society, the memory of those experiences as well as the totality of their informal... and formal... organization. Institutions build values, language, organization, and symbols which influence and mold the lives of their participants. The way the Church responds to these facts at a given time in history, will in a large measure, determine the forms which the Church must take to serve, communicate, and participate in the 'Good News' and in creation. Its very life existence depends upon this ability to respond." ED, p. 36. See also ED, p. 73.

Resource persons (outside specialists) will be needed to assist in the search for community understanding. Sociology will be of immense help here; but understanding need not be limited to the insights of sociology. A variety of academic specialties may be employed, in such areas as psychology, social-psychology, religious phenomenology, literature, religious history, and communication. As problem areas are uncovered, the help of specialists in such fields as labor relations, health, education, and economics may be sought in order to deepen understanding.

It is obvious that this type of community understanding cannot be achieved all at once; it is a search, part of an on-going process. But by suggesting that the process begin with this effort and concentrate on it exclusively for a period of time, the WCC Study Group wished to stress the importance of first listening to the world so that the Church's servanthood will truly correspond to the world's real religious needs.[20]

4. Search for Clarification of the Goals of Mission: Theology. There is a sense in which it is true to say that this is the crucial step in the process. Without a clear understanding of what the Church is supposed to be doing in the world, it is possible to put forth immense efforts with minimal results.

Theologians versed in ecclesiology, missiology, and ecumenism will be able to assist the group to outline clearly areas of theological differences, and at the same time to discover areas of agreement sufficient to undergird a common sense of urgent mission.[21]

The group will struggle with such basic questions as God's great plan for the world and His invitation to Christians to share in His mission; the "given" message - God intruding Himself into history with a supernatural gift raising man above himself[22]; the "given" structure of the Church, and its present concrete expression in the world.[23]

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[20] CFO, p. 69.

[21] The Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity of Vatican II (n. 15) provides for Catholics an authoritative justification for such effort: "To the extent that their beliefs are common, they can make before the nations a common profession of faith in God and in Jesus Christ. They can collaborate in social and in technical projects as well as in cultural and religious ones. Let them work together especially for the sake of Christ, their common Lord. Let His Name be the bond that unites them! This cooperation should be undertaken not only among private persons, but also, according to the judgment of the local Ordinary, among Churches or ecclesial Communities and their enterprises."

[22] "God sends his messengers, his Messiah, his Spirit to release man from his self-imposed or self-chosen fixations and to open the future for him. Exodus and Easter are the great symbols of this historicizing process of human existence: resurrection from death to share life with the living God." CFO, p. 94. Cf. also ED, p. 50.

The Church's religious ministry of Word and Sacrament will be seen both for what it is, and for what it is not (mere humanitarian service, a substitute social reformism). This ministry will be considered in its inward, nurturing aspect (providing for the spiritual development of Christians through fellowship and instruction, with proper attention to the building of institutional structures for this purpose); and its outward aspect (outreach to the individual by means of evangelism, and the redemption of social structures).[24] The roles of clergy and laity in this ministry will be explored from theological perspective.

Finally the group will attempt to grapple with a theology of change of institutional forms of Church life. They will consider the point of view of the "reformers" who believe that the greatest task is renewal of old forms from within; the "radicals" who wish to reshape old forms and creat new ones as well; and the "revolutionaries" who require the complete death of old forms.[25] They may well conclude that "to fail to recognize the need for major institutional changes, and to fail to recognize the importance and inevitability of institutional continuity within the process of change, is both a theological error and a sociological error."[26]

5. Structuring for Mission. Within the context of this understanding of man's needs and missionary goals, the group can then realistically begin to ask how the Churches - working ecumenically - can create structures for total mission in the community. Alternate courses of action will present themselves in the context of the "over-view" which has been achieved. These alternatives will be studied under the realistic searchlights of available resources and present attitudes.

Here the help of resource persons will also be needed, both to indicate the theological possibilities and limitations for specific ecumenical structures, and to point to the experience of groups in other parts of the country who have struggled with similar problems.

Part of the solution to the problem of structure may be for local churches of similar denominational traditions to merge. This has already happened in some places, with encouraging results.[27] It must be recognized, however, that this cannot be realistically proposed to every group within the community, certainly not at this time to either Catholics or conservative evangelicals. Ecumenical action will still be needed.

It is possible that the present state of ecumenical advance may make it necessary for the Church's work of nurture (Christian education, worship) to be carried out largely (although not exclusively) within separate fellowships. Some attention may be given by the group to improving the quality of Christian nurture, perhaps along the lines suggested by the WCC Study Group.[28] It is also likely that the traditional residence-based parish structure will continue to retain its importance for this aspect of the Church's task.[29]

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[23] ED, p. 32.
[24] ED, p. 35.
[25] CFO, pp. 65 and 87.
[26] CFO, p. 66.
[27] Horace S. Sills (ed.), Grassroots Ecumenicity (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1967). This book contains case studies of successful Church mergers in small towns.

The work of outreach may provide more possibilities for ecumenical structures transcending the boundaries of individual churches. The WCC Study Group has suggested various possibilities:[30]

The permanent availability structure. This is orientated around long-term tasks, seeking to make specialized (religious) services available to people whenever they need them, without necessarily attempting to involve them in institutional affiliation. An example would be an ecumenical religious counseling center.

The task-force structure. This comes into being in response to a particular issue or function, and goes out of existence when the problem has been solved or the function is assumed elsewhere. Task forces can seek to provide Christian ministry (both evangelism and redemption of social structures) within powerful groups in society, through ecumenically-organized and committed Christians who are already members of these groups. Examples would include the fields of politics, mass media, education, recreation, and business. Other task forces may seek to identify with the powerless groups in society, such as the poor, the elderly, the sick, the racial minorities.

The WCC Group has suggested other possible structures, but these two will serve as illustrations.

Admittedly the structures suggested are complex. "Such a plurality of approaches and the resulting pluriformity of structures may be confusing. It challenges us to seek the unity not in our structures and theological concepts but in the fact that throughout this plurality and pluriformity God is calling us to be with him in his redemptive work for the whole world."[31]

Such an attempt at specialized religious ministry is admittedly visionary, and its implementation will certainly have to be tempered by the realities of present resources and manpower. The creation of such a vision, however, is bound to result in pressures for the education of more specialists, both within and outside the ministry, if the Church is to respond as adequately as the other institutions of our time to the challenges of a rapidly-evolving and complex society.[32]

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[28] CFO, p. 81

[29] CFO, p. 70.

[30] CFO, p. 84.

[31] CFO, p. 86.

[32] ED, pp. 48, 103, and 130 ff.

Another effect of the ecumenical planning process will be the realization that the religious problems of a given community cannot be solved apart from the larger area of which it is a part. Hopefully this will cause the Church in the local community to work towards cooperation in areas transcending the local community, especially within the Functional Economic Area, which seems to be emerging as the basic planning unit of town and country community.

6. Continuing Process, Action, and Evaluation. This project is not a once-for-all effort aimed at achieving a "formula" for mission. Appropriate action will be taken as the study progresses; there will be continual evaluation of both goals and means; and hopefully the planning process itself will become central to the task of mission.[33]

SOME RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Mention has already been made of how research resource persons will assist the local group in the planning process.[34] It is expected that the research function will also include making the results of the project available to the Church at large.[35] And finally, as Lauris B. Whitman has pointed out, it is important that those implications be drawn out of Church-related research that will further enlarge general theory and knowledge.[36]

CONCLUSION

In suggesting such an experiment, I am not unaware that the proposal is both visionary and bristling with difficulties. Yet I am convinced that the climate is now favorable for carrying it out. This Consultation has demonstrated the commitment of national Church leaders to the ecumenical planning process; resource persons are available; local communities exist where a favorable ecumenical climate has prepared the way; and somehow the financial obstacles could be overcome.

It is not enough for the owl to advise the weasel to turn himself into a frog; or for us to be told that we are to be missionaries in today's world. Somehow we ourselves must discover ways to give meaningful expression to our commitment. Here is a concrete proposal for the town and country apostolate, which I believe should help.

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[33] ED, p. 105 ff.

[34] For further insights into the role of research in planning, see: ED, pp. 63-64 and 125; CFO, p. 58; and Perry L. Norton, op. cit., pp. 42-58 and 89-95.

[35] This would include relating the project to the WCC Missionary Structures Study.

[36] Lauris B. Whitman, "Research and Planning," in Perry L. Norton, op. cit., p. 132.

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Study Document for the National Consultation on the Church in Community Life...

ECUMENICAL DESIGNS:

Imperatives for Action in Non-Metropolitan America

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